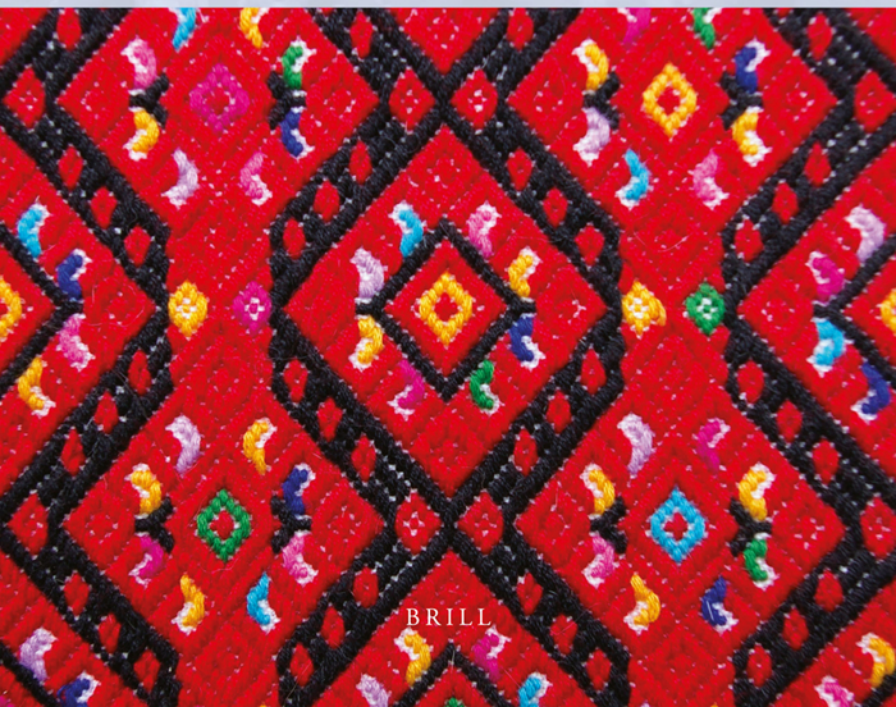


Studies in Critical Social Sciences
Critical Global Studies 2

Katherine O'Donnell

Weaving Transnational Solidarity

From the Catskills to Chiapas and Beyond



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Weaving Transnational Solidarity

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From the Catskills to Chiapas and Beyond

By

Katherine O'Donnell



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On the cover: Brocaded tapestry from San Andrés Larrainzar, Chiapas, Mexico. Weaver unknown. Photographer: Joseph C. Stillman.

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my mom, (*ema* in Estonian), Maimu Saar Niinemets O'Donnell Raudsepp, a WWII refugee, who as a young woman, fled her native country-Estonia—became a widow, and with her two, small children and my grandmother, survived five years of hunger and bombing in displaced persons camps in Austria and Germany. She is my inspiration for heart, bravery, beauty, patriotism, compassion, and social justice.

In January, 1998, when I took students to meet indigenous Guatemalan women refugees and their children at a camp clinic in Chiapas, I wept openly. Hearing the women describe walking over the high mountains on the border to escape repression, violence, and death brought me back to similar stories that my mother had told me since I was a young girl. Understanding my commitments to the women and families associated with Jolom Mayaetik, therefore, is very much about heart-*corazón*.

GRACIAS (THANKS)

This work has involved many people. I thank my *compañeras y compañeros* (female and male comrades/allies) at Jolom and K'in al and their families in San Cristóbal and in highland villages. My family has helped in many ways from traveling with me, helping with events and sales, praying, and hosting my friends. Colleagues, community members, and students—fellow activists and solidarity marketers—assist with fair trade marketing across the US, talks, Anti-Sweatshop/Fair Trade fashion shows, popular education, hosting visitors from Chiapas, and fundraising. Jenifer Chambers took the time to read the entire manuscript and correct the Spanish and she also did the index and the translations of the speeches found in the appendix. She has enthusiastically embraced Jolom in the short time that she has been as Hartwick. Kate Shaffer helped me with references and gave me lots of logistical help. Like Jenifer, she has fallen in love with the Jolom story and textiles. I appreciate the support! Hartwick College funded my initial course work in Chiapas through the Luce Foundation First Year Cultural Immersion Program and supported my work in Chiapas through a subsequent Trustee sabbatical research grant and book production funds through Academic Affairs.

I also thank Winona LaDuke, Vandana Shiva, June Nash, and Patricia Fernandez-Kelly for their inspiring work and the wisdom they shared with me during visits to Hartwick College and June for her supportive friendship, keen insights, and lovely home. Special thanks to Barbara Schütz for her friendship, insight, analysis, and wisdom.

Con Corazón (with heart). Together, we are weaving Social Justice.

Royalties generated from the sale of this book will be used to develop and support health, human rights, fair trade sales, and education projects in association with Jolom Mayaetik, K'in al Antzetik, and the Lady of Fatima Chol Clinic.



Figure 1 Mural painted by Lourdes Egea Florez on the wall of a former Jolom Mayaetik and K'inol Antzetik center and office in San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico.
Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

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GLOSSARY

Key: (Sp.-Spanish)

<i>Las Abejas</i>	The Bees. Organization in Chenalhó dedicated to nonviolent resistance (Sp.).
Acteal	Site of December 22, 1997 massacre in township of Chenalhó.
Autonomous zone	A community with governance, school, and local administration in connection with Zapatistas.
<i>Campesino/a</i>	a peasant farmer (Sp.)
<i>Cargo</i>	duty carried out for benefit of one's community. Jolom Mayaetik board members refer to their elected term of office as a cargo (Sp.)
Chol	dominant Mayan language and indigenous group in the northern region of Chiapas.
Civil society	Citizen groups including churches. Members of Jolom Mayaetik and K'in al Antzetik distinguish between civil society and the Zapatistas.
CODIMUJ	(Diocesan Coordination of Women) Network of grassroots women's Catholic groups in diocese of San Cristóbal.
<i>Colonia</i>	settlement on outskirts of a city (Sp.).
<i>Compañero/a:</i>	comrade, ally (Sp.).
EZLN	(Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional) (Zapatista Army of National Liberation) (Sp).
Femicide	the phenomenon of massive, female homicides of young maquila workers in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico.
Gringo	Slang word, put down for White people. The term is also used to refer to policies associated with North America.
INI	(National Indigenous Institute): Mexican federal government organization responsible for national policies for indigenous peoples (Sp.).
Indigenous	Distinct cultural self identification. In the case of Jolom Mayaetik, women and their families identify as Tzotzil and Tzeltal which corresponds with

	their native language. Jolom Mayaetik women refer to language, beliefs, customs, weaving designs, traditional dress, communities, Mayan political and social institutions, and land as part of indigenous life.
Liberation Theology	Progressive Catholic theology developed in Latin America in 1960s which aligns the church with economic justice. Paulo Freire's work in <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> is aligned with this philosophy.
Low intensity warfare	Military strategy designed to repress popular resistance through military intimidation and violence.
<i>Mestizo</i>	A person of mixed indigenous and Spanish heritage (Sp.).
<i>Milpa</i>	A plot of land used to grow corn, beans, and often squash.
NGOs	Nongovernmental civil society organizations independent of national governments.
PAN (<i>Partido Acción Nacional</i>)	National Action Party (Sp.). One of the three major political parties in Mexico and the most conservative.
PRI (<i>Partido Revolucionario Institucional</i>)	(the Institutional Revolutionary Party): Political party which monopolized Mexican politics from 1929–2000 (Sp.)
paramilitaries	armed civilian militias.
peso	Mexican currency. In 2009 the exchange rate for the US dollar was 15:1 (Sp.).
Tzeltal	Major Mayan language and indigenous group in highlands of Chiapas.
Tzotzil	dominant Mayan language and indigenous group in the highland region of Chiapas.
Zapatistas	(see EZLN)

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PREFACE—¡MUJERES ADELANTE!
(WOMEN MOVING FORWARD!)

The Mayan women I work with in the highland region of Chiapas, Mexico, often say '*poco a poco*' (little by little) in a hopeful sense when describing the slow pace of change or when cautioning me about frustrations. That these indigenous women govern themselves, organize and speak publicly, and create autonomous economic relations is necessary but threatening to many organizations and indigenous cultural traditions that limit indigenous women's political independence. My *compañeras* (comrades) are the revolution within the revolution in Chiapas.

This is an account of an emerging, grassroots activist network composed of three groups—two, independent, Mexican organizations, Jolom Mayaetik, a Mayan women's weaving cooperative, and K'inál Antzetik, a multiethnic, grassroots nongovernmental organization (NGO) in the *Altos* (highlands) of Chiapas, Mexico, and an informal, international solidarity network of which I am a part. We are working for social and economic justice. In the midst of low intensity warfare, militarization, economic contractions, and social conflict, civil society—non-governmental associations, organizations, and social movements in the global south and north—are organizing for political and economic autonomy, human rights, and indigenous respect and women are in the forefront of that struggle.

This book locates formal social movement work in Chiapas, Mexico and informal organizing in the US in transnational political, economic, and solidarity contexts. It has multiple goals and is directed to various audiences. The book's primary goal is strategic—to sharpen the solidarity process to achieve the outcomes desired by the cooperative with whom we work. In order to work more effectively, the book analyzes and critically reflects on previous economic, health, and education solidarity efforts and assesses their pluses and minuses so as to develop more effective future efforts. This analysis is a direct result of our 2007 international workshop and is meant to address long term concerns raised then. The discussion of resource mobilization, intercultural communication issues involving power, money, autonomy, and respect, and international organizational development might be

of most interest to activists, scholar-activists, those wishing to pursue such endeavors, as well as those who are committed to economic justice and human rights issues.

A second purpose involves reflection on the issue of sustainability and the ethical commitments of practicing public or “organic sociology” (Burawoy 2008). What is the relationship of the academy to the communities in which we live, work, and study? The book addresses pedagogical, administrative, and alignment issues for faculty, students, staff, and administrators as well as NGO personnel.

Finally, in locating local processes in transnational contexts, the text is “grounding globalization” (Burawoy 2000). As an extended case study (Burawoy 1991) of transnational organizing, the book provides empirical, ethnographic data which can be used to expand the theoretical conceptualization of new social movements (de la Barra and Dello Buono 2009), human rights, and the solidarity process, specifically accompaniment, which is conceptualized as a research strategy but more importantly and fundamentally a political alliance relationship.

Weaving

The book represents a tapestry composed of multifaceted, complementary, contradictory, and conflicting threads of action arising from within Chiapas and internationally. The weaving represents both resistance and counter resistance; social justice organizing and efforts to reinforce neoliberal ideologies and structures. It is composed of formal and informal mobilizing structures some with ties to social movements and others not (Smith 2006). While the metaphor of weaving works well to describe the process of combining thousands of threads of thought and action together, social weaving behavior, unlike the weavings of the cooperative with whom we work, is messy and not based on shared knowledge and patterns that have been passed down for centuries. Also, when a woman weaves, she is the author of the design and its production. This is not the case for social weaving.

Weavers include organizations, movements, and people working for inclusive democracies and human needs—oriented economies as well as those working for the market driven realities of international financial institutions (IFIs) translated into Mexican and global policy and everyday challenges. To work together, those of us in the social justice and solidarity network have to understand multiple worldviews—

Chiapas Mexico

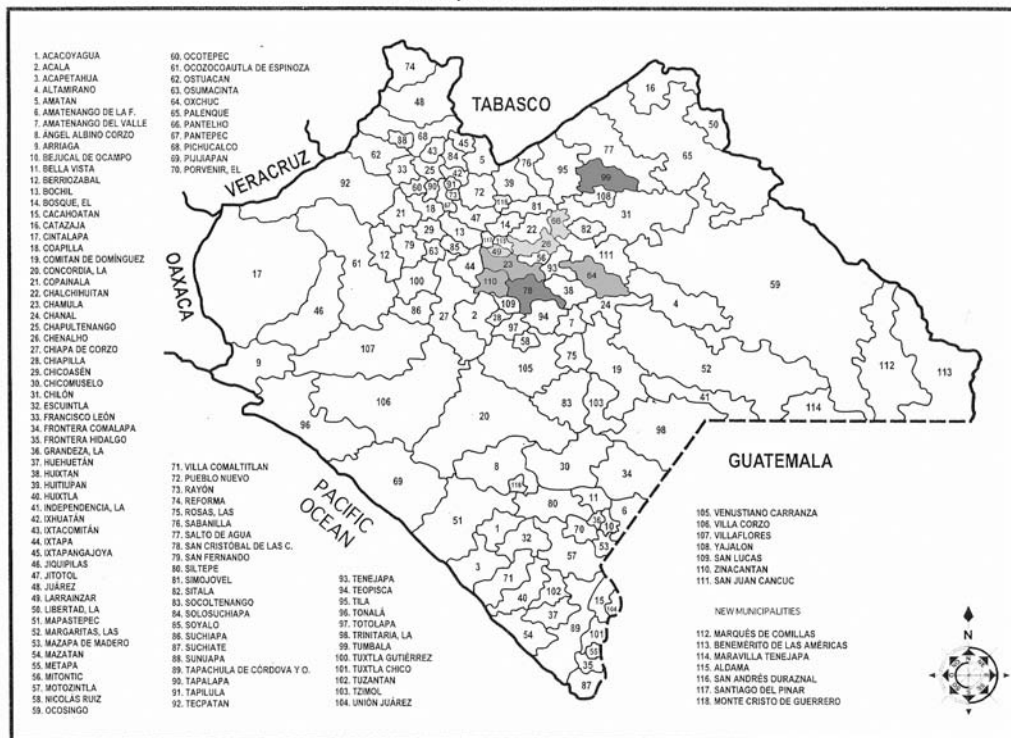


Figure 2 Map of Jolom Groups and their Communities in Chiapas, Mexico. Communities with groups of the Jolom Mayaetik weaving cooperative include: Chenalhó #26 (1 group), Larrainzar #49 (eight groups), Pantelhó #66 (2 groups), Chamula #23 (1 group), Oxchuc #64 (1 group) and Zinacantán #110 (1 group). The Center for Training and Education which houses the Jolom Mayaetik and K'inál Antzetik and Jolom Mayaetik offices are located in San Cristóbal #78. Clinic in Tumbalá is #99. Courtesy of Dave Kenny.

including dreams, philosophies, uncertainties, conflicts, and every day practices.

The structure of the text also reflects a developmental process—my own growing consciousness as part of the evolution of the solidarity relationship. The book is constructed to capture the political economic contexts within which we have been working as well as the emergent processes and interventions that we are creating.

The book begins with an overview (Chapter 1) of transnational feminist organizing and a discussion of the process of building a solidarity

relationship through accompaniment. This is both a part of the solidarity developmental process and a methodology for learning and understanding. I also discuss the context of civil society organizing in Chiapas and the complexity of relations in that sector and Jolom and K'inál's role in it.

Chapter 2 conceptualizes economic, social, cultural, political, economic, women's and indigenous rights within the embedded contexts of local and global conveying the Jolom and K'inál organizational perspectives as well as that of a feminist, global justice stance. This chapter also explores the tension between individualistic and collective human rights emphases. Competing and sometimes contradictory ideologies enter into the framing and goals of transnational solidarity. If we as global civil society are going to successfully confront the enormous challenges of transnational capital, global environmental crises, transnational collusion in denying human rights, global trafficking of people, privatization of resources, and imperialist wars, we have to tackle these issues.

In 2004, we were invited to participate in a Human Rights Symposium at Miami University. In a talk that I gave as part of that visit, I summarized by saying that the challenge coming from indigenous women was very clear—dismantle the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO. The moderator, a professor of International Relations, responded, Kate, can you give us something more realistic? I responded, the indigenous women believe that it is possible to disband the IFIs and necessary for survival—theirs and the planet's. The unique perspective and location of indigenous women speaks to us all.

Chapter 3 describes my awakening to the underworld of Mexican security and the emergence of a sense of shared surveillance status between my colleagues in Chiapas and me. Chapter three discusses my shift in consciousness and perception as I move from tourist to academic observer and later solidarity relationships and explores the impact of militarization, low intensity warfare, and human rights violations in Chiapas.

I started professional trips to Chiapas in 1997 and began working with groups in 1998. This was during a period of post-Zapatista rebellion—(January 1, 1994 indigenous uprising in Chiapas) which led to heightened security, internal repression, and government actions against foreign human rights workers and observers. While my own expulsion from Mexico in March, 1999 for alleged political actions

made me feel like an alien in some contexts, it brought me closer to the people with whom I desired to work. This was very evident when I sat in the office of the Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas Center for Human Rights in San Cristóbal with members of the *Abejas*, indigenous civil society organization dedicated to peaceful resistance from the area where the terrible massacre in Acteal had occurred in 1997. All of us were waiting to see a lawyer about our human rights violations cases.

My shift in consciousness and relationship can also be charted by the vocabulary I was learning. In 1999, at the Immigration Office where I was questioned after the Zapatista Referendum on Indigenous Rights, I rehearsed vocabulary so as not to make mistakes—embarrassed (*embarazoso*)—not pregnant (*embarazada*); parade not *manifestación* (demonstration). I was learning Spanish by the seat of my pants. *Derechos humanos*, *expulsada*, *extranjera* (human rights, expelled person, foreigner)—I saw the words in the headlines and heard them in interviews. During my first years of work in Chiapas, I learned of paramilitaries, government repression, and surveillance. In chapter three, I talk about these events and their impact on doing fieldwork.

Chapter 4 discusses K'inäl and the emergence of my feminist alignment with their work through the process of accompaniment. As our relationships and commitments deepened, greater trust emerged through the accompaniment of K'inäl and Jolom. The philosophy and process of accompaniment entails walking with someone in the process of mutual education and committing to shared values and goals. It is non-hierarchical. Accompaniment became central to my understanding of process in these organizations and often made me more critical of north-south work and actions which were implicitly and explicitly hierarchical but were often couched in “helping.”

In Chapter 5, I describe the cooperative with whom I have worked for the last decade and their sense of collective process. It discusses the philosophy and structure of the Jolom Mayaetik's Mayan women's weaving cooperative and analyzes challenges which confront them. Here I begin the discussion of the creation of economic solidarity and its translations into networks, solidarity marketing, and tours with the objective of selling the cooperative's textiles and doing popular education, course and delegation development, and joint participation at national US conferences. Over the years, at the Society for Applied Anthropology (SFAA) conference, we have created clans of Chamula blouse wearers, fanciers of huipiles from San Andrés, purse people,

shawl—lovers festooning blazers with stripes from Yochib some carrying babies who peeped their heads out from inside shawls slung across their mothers' backs, highland Mayan style. In 2005, we created a marketplace solidarity community at our booth at the American Anthropological Association conference in Washington, D.C. and began the necessary workshop conversation of how we build economic solidarity. The solidarity network for Jolom Mayaetik and members of the Maasai American Organization which works in both Kenya and Guatemala were participants.

Chapter 6 explores our first hand encounter with the World Bank, architects of globalization and mystifiers of Plan Puebla Panama—the development scheme targeting southern Mexico. Paraphrasing Vandana Shiva, globalization is war by other means (Shiva 2002:268) and the women feel and witness the “collateral damage” of that war—increasing poverty, rising cost of living, sharply increasing prices for imported corn and falling coffee prices, economic destabilization, rising militarization, increasing violence against women, land expulsions, and refugee camps—all gave me insight into resistance work and its many forms. I learned about bloqueos (road blocks), sit—ins (plantónes), boycotting the privatization of electricity, and popular education north and south. My awareness widened through the network of conferences and organizations devoted to anti-globalization work. The 2003 Conference against the Militarization of the Americas held in San Cristóbal brought 1000 representatives from around the world to Chiapas. We again met at the 2003 alternative trade forum at the Cancun WTO meetings where the global south gave a resounding “NO” to US—inspired trade policies and where a South Korean farmer took his life to protest, “The WTO kills farmers.” Jolom Mayaetik and K’inal Mayaetik representatives marched in Cancun and camped with the *campesinos* (peasants). Others of us attended the Fair Trade discussions and meetings and the Jolom Mayaetik booth at the Alternative Trade Exhibition Hall.

Chapter 7 explores institutional facets of the solidarity relationship as we developed it and as it has played out in the US and in Chiapas as well as health partnerships we have developed. Community—based preventative and alternative health programs are central to the work of Jolom and K’inal.

Given the urgency of economic concerns, the marketing of textiles is foregrounded and alternative development is explored. Committing to

economic solidarity means that theoretical examination and informal marketing give way to serious, long term, and larger scale marketing strategies—things we had to learn and are still learning to do together. After initial networking with Mexico Solidarity Network ended, we had to create new networks and sales sites and fortify existing relations. The Jolom story told through the marketing of fair trade textiles is still in process.

Moving toward solidarity has entailed committing to marketing, fundraising, political education work, networking in the US, and joint grant writing and has led us to participate in economic projects as well as health projects. It also means working out contracts and accounts, conferences, and speaking tours with numerous organizations including feminist and labor groups, universities, museums, anti-globalization, Latin American Solidarity, and antiwar groups.

A solidarity ethic infuses networks to varying degrees; alignment is the transnational solidarity movement's response to economic globalization. While empowerment was a central goal of the US women's movements, my experience with 2nd wave 1980's feminist organizing was that it was rarely organized or conceptualized truly collectively. Jolom Mayaetik's philosophy is collective and very powerful. Their emphasis is on social and economic rights and social justice.

Transnational solidarity work with Jolom and K'inál in the inter-related arenas of alternative development—fair trade marketing of the cooperative's textiles, health, and education—all in response to globalization and its associated practices of structural adjustment, privatization, and militarization—is examined and critiqued. There are substantial challenges regarding sharing information, turf wars, personality conflicts, process, patience, and control of resources including technology, money, and agendas. Time frames, language issues, cultural expectations regarding how quickly organizations can move or how much time it takes to make basic plans like trip planning, visa acquisition, catalogue and web development sometimes interact with egos. In the US, we have worked with Pastors for Peace, Madre, Labor Religion Coalition, Planned Parenthood, IDEX, Society for Applied Anthropology, and other organizations to share resources, minimize costs, and create a large base of supporters for the work.

In Chapter 8, I discuss my educational context as a site to facilitate a solidarity relationship and process with students. Launching the idea of a Weaving Solidarity Network on our Hartwick campus in 2008 marks

the proposed institutional formalization of this relationship beyond an academic course. This chapter also continues the discussion of solidarity within the academic realm, the timeframe of the long haul, the demands of critical partnership, and challenges the academy to shift paradigms in order to create just, ethical, and sustainable work.

Chapter 9 takes up the question of how to mobilize the resources of the North American solidarity network and align with others. This strategic organizing question was formally discussed by us in Chiapas in 2007. These challenges continue along with the changing political landscapes in the US and Chiapas. This remains a work-in-progress based on lifelong friendships and commitments and lessons about how we are to survive on the planet by working to respect our differences and toward shared concerns. In this final chapter, I place our evolving work in the context of the nascent international solidarity network for Jolom Mayaetik as well as within civil society organizing in Chiapas and the US. This examination inventories strengths and weaknesses and points to steps that those in solidarity with Jolom need to initiate in order to work more effectively and realistically with Jolom on sustainable economic justice.

Three major themes inform my analysis of transnational social justice organizing and critical, strategic reflection. 1. Race, class, ethnicity, and gender interact in neoliberal globalization (Cavanagh and others 2002; McMichael 2004; de la Barra and Dello Buono 2009) and in the resistance movements against it. At this stage in the global justice movement, the question is not whether the subaltern speaks but rather who is listening and who is responding in what ways? Nawal El Saadawi (2006:30) celebrates the emergence of a new “creative solidarity of peoples, a solidarity seeking common goals in the richness of diversity” and rooted in “the rejection of all forms of discrimination based on class, gender, race, color, or religion.” She argues that this new global solidarity is strongly influenced by feminist work which has “unmasked the contradictions of the class, patriarchal system,” created new forms of organizing, and “questioned the separation between the local and the global.”

Saadawi echoes Mohanty’s (1991:3) early discussion of the need for more nuanced analyses of the interrelation of colonialism, race, ethnicity, gender, and capitalism and her recent (Mohanty 2003:20) call to create connections between feminist scholarship and transnational organizing which have as their target global capitalism and “how its

functioning depends on and exacerbates racist, patriarchal, and heterosexist relations of rule.” To do so entails locating our analyses and organizing in the experiences of people—especially women and girls living in specific communities as the majority recipients of globalization’s worst effects and as the world’s greatest resisters. We must also “read up” the ladder of privilege to understand the transnational, institutionalized, and interpersonal practices of ruling as well as to understand points of intervention and opportunities for cross border political solidarity. Mohanty (2003:14) hints at the complexity of such work in saying, “Transnational feminist practice depends on building feminist solidarities across the divides of place, identity, class, work, belief, and so on.” She adds that despite its difficulty, such work is needed now more than ever.

Basu (2003:31) cautions that transnational activism can create divisions between elites who belong to national and international networks and the vast majority of grassroots women who do not. Transnational feminist organizing can also involve NGOs which basically function as government fronts as well as hybrids which “work with social movements and work inside and outside the system ...to offer critique and mobilize resources to empower women” (Alvarez 2002:32). Basu (2003) and Naples (2002) also note that campaigns organized around women’s political rights, for example, ending female genital mutilation, are more likely to be successful than those organized around the feminization of poverty and economic rights.

2. Human rights are interlinked; material conditions shape the capacity to realize rights. The rights to food, water, housing, health—including reproductive—are primary and part of dignity, justice, and democracy. Dean (1996:44) argues that “civic solidarity is a commitment to the material needs of fellow citizens as material conditions affect the ability to exercise rights.” Collective approaches to rights must be recognized and respected along with individual ones (Nagengast and Vélez-Ibáñez 2004).

3. Solidarity is praxis. It is a multidimensional personal and political relationship and commitment to doing work together. It is imbued with the complexities of power and privilege and the promise of hope and equity. Accompaniment—a horizontal relationship of mutual learning building collective commitment and trust along the way—is a method for enacting and understanding solidarity.

I moved from tourist to academic observer and finally to a solidarity relationship through what is referred to in Latin America as the “accompaniment” of K’inal and Jolom members. As our relationship has deepened and we have grown to trust each other and know each other, my role has emerged as a bridge person between academic, Fair Trade, health, and human rights individuals, organizations, and networks in the north and K’inal and Jolom. Consequently, in brokering relationships for grants, speaking tours, or marketing of textiles, I have been in the middle of many conversations and have had to translate actions and decisions back and forth. I have also attended conferences in Chiapas in conjunction with my *compañeras* but always as a US representative and ally of Jolom. Part of my role has been the documentation of the work of the grassroots, Maya women’s weaving cooperative, Jolom Mayaetik, for partnerships, marketing, grants, and popular education tours in the US.

Our global north-south work has centered in several key areas including economic solidarity-alternative trade, health, and education-formal and popular. This text emerged through accompanying the women in the US and the need to prepare materials which explained the women’s work in the context of Chiapas, indigenous rights, and globalization. This book grows out of that shared work and the friendship which emerges out of our co-presenting at conferences, selling textiles together, or talking on long drives to the communities, a clinic in the mountains of Chiapas, or upstate New York where I live and work. We share a sense of urgency; the stakes are very high for women, their families, communities, and our world. Despite the seriousness of the situation, there is lots of laughter. Hope is a critical element of the struggle.

For those of us who believe a different world is possible and necessary, I share struggles and strategies, successes and pitfalls of transnational organizing so that we can build stronger, more inclusive movements for social justice. I also wish to tell the story of the great leadership of the women in Chiapas, their struggles and breakthroughs, their collective vision, and the inspired solidarity work that is emerging both north and south. While I am a veteran of several decades of women’s movement organizing, reproductive rights, peace, and anti-poverty work in this region, I have rarely seen the camaraderie and commitment to collective practice and organization that these women

have created. It is a powerful lesson to those of us engaged in feminist organizing at this time.

From this work I have learned about autonomy that acknowledges interconnection—truly a local-global vision, indigenous sovereignty, and pluri-ethnic consciousness which challenges ethnocide, biopiracy, and neocolonialism. Self-determination, intellectual property rights, stewardship of the commons, and a human connection to the land and all living things are central to our solidarity struggle and what Vandana Shiva (2000:123) calls earth-based democracy; Starhawk (2002) calls redistributive economic justice; Winona LaDuke (1999) reminds us of respecting the principles of Kaienarakowa—the great law of peace and the good mind.

PART I

FRAMES/LOOMS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: TRANSNATIONAL SOLIDARITY—GLOBAL JUSTICE IS GENDERED: CIVIL SOCIETY IN RESISTANCE

Women around the world, including those with whom I work in Chiapas, are organizing around economics as it is a bottom line reality, necessity, and issue of survival. They see poverty as a rights issue—not separate from it. As will be explored in more detail in subsequent chapters, global north—influenced big, international, nongovernmental organizations (BINGOS) have often separated individual from collective and economic from political rights—indigenous women stress the intersection of rights. Over the last 20 years, feminists have asserted rights as gendered and intersecting; other progressive movements have not necessarily done so (See Keri Iyall Smith 2006; Stavenhagen 2004 on evolution of rights frameworks). Perhaps the lack of success of women's movements which foreground economics is also linked to global north feminists, BINGOs, and international organizations' incapacity to imagine alternatives to economic globalization, create them, and accept our complicity with the workings of the capitalist system. Academic research and NGO operating budgets benefit from our privileged positions; we have choices. Some are working to make economic interventions and organizing alternatives; most are not.

Working with women who have formed a cooperative and who have chosen to pursue their own approach to development has been illuminating in a number of ways. The members themselves see this action as a complement to the subsistence work that their families in the mountain villages do to produce their families' staple foods of corn, vegetables, and beans, as well as shelter, and clothing needs. Bartering is also still part of economic survival. The cooperative is a strategy to socialize risk and share costs—costs that no individual woman or family could shoulder alone. The cooperative also produces shared economic and political benefits. Economically, the women gain from pooled resources and access to international markets and resources including Fair Trade, commercial, foundation, and personal. Politically, there is strength in numbers—numbers within the organization itself and

Mexican and global civil society. Finally, the women see the cooperative as a survival strategy against the political exclusion and the poverty that economic globalization has created and as an alternative to their projected role as *maquila* (foreign owned factory) workers in the development plans that have come down the pike-NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and Plan Puebla Panama (PPP)-an industrial development, infrastructure, and transportation project running from Puebla, Mexico to Panama aimed at creating export processing zones in Mesoamerica (O'Donnell 2003; No PPP n.d.). Often they link poverty to "the bad government" or "*empresas*-large companies." The situation is also discussed in terms of neoliberalism, neocolonialism, and neoimperialism. The women in the cooperative are living within multiple economies simultaneously and intervening in the brutality of the global capitalist system.

In response to their political and economic marginalization, the cooperative's members are organizing independently, democratically, and autonomously and controlling their own money. They assert their rights as women and indigenous people and network with organizations to institutionalize this nationally and internationally. Their own development over time involves the generation of capital that they control but they must first solve the immediate issue of paying the members of the cooperative for the textiles produced so the women can feed their families and cover basic living costs. It is only in the last few years that the cooperative has seen a profit but there is still no nest egg and cooperative costs are not covered by sales. There are plans and dreams and projections for future cooperative ventures. To paraphrase Marx, they are not sitting on the edge of the world looking in, nor are they passively accepting oppression-they are intervening. Again to paraphrase Marx, they live in a world that they did not make alone and one that they will not transform alone either.

Members of the international solidarity network working with Jolom Mayaetik recognize and acknowledge the Mayan women's weaving cooperative's decision to tackle economic globalization, intense poverty, racism, and sexism head-on with the skills they have and others they and we are acquiring. Internationally, we are committing to this same mission. We share the critique of poverty, denial of rights, marginalization of women and indigenous peoples. Not all of us have the same view on international financial institutions (IFIs), global capitalism, or democratic socialism and our political and organizing response in the global north.

Mass civil society—nongovernmental civic association and social movement—organizing and protest in Chiapas are also occurring around economic issues including the privatization of water and electricity, militarization, land seizures, neoliberal development, and WTO trade law impact on food quality, cost, and sovereignty. Such organizing is manifested in Chiapas in the *campesino* (peasant) movement, Catholic Church organizations, unions, indigenous and women's movements, the flowering of cooperatives and collectives, the National Front for the Fight for Socialism (*Frente Nacional de Lucha por el Socialismo*—FNLS), and is realized in other countries through mobilizations like the worker—run collectives and occupied factories of Argentina called horizontalism (Sitrin 2003) or poor women's governing of business and banking through organizations like SEWA of India. Nash (2007) speculates on a pan-Mayan movement.

Solidarity

While talking about solidarity is one thing, doing it is another. Mohanty (2003:12–13) outlines a feminist solidarity perspective which analyzes common interests, agency, and resistance across borders. Her approach emphasizes a reorientation of feminism toward anticapitalist struggles via a rethinking of pedagogy and scholarship on globalization and through the development of a critique of the anti-globalization movement and its lack of “racialized gender and feminist politics” (2003:13). She adds that such an approach should also teach active citizenship. I take up the praxis part of this work in subsequent chapters.

For Freire (1989:34–35), solidarity is as a radical posture—one where the oppressor stands and fights with the oppressed and sees them not as victims but people “who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voice, and cheated in the sale of their labor.” The oppressor must move beyond sentimentality, pity, and individualistic gestures and work with the oppressed—through praxis—to transform the concrete situations which spawn inequality. Liberation involves liberation for all parties involved in the oppressor-oppressed relationship. This is co-leading through dialogue, relationship, and struggling and working together. The question remains, how is solidarity possible across structural and power fissures?

In arguing against solidarity conceived of as based on sameness or identity, feminist philosopher Jodi Dean (1996:46) influenced by

G.H. Mead's notion of generalized others, posits the notion of reflective solidarity—a solidarity that “offers the possibility of community among those who respect and take accountability for their differences.” She asserts that “We are all always insiders and outsiders, not monolithic—a stance, a perspective that allows us to evoke the potential of a community of us all (1996:34).”

Dean (1996:44) argues that “civic solidarity is a commitment to the material needs of fellow citizens as material conditions affect the ability to exercise rights.” It involves “Standing by and taking responsibility for others who trust each other enough to allow for different perspectives regarding each person's relationship to the group of which we are a part (1996:41).”

Like Dean, Starhawk (2002) recognizes contradictions and diversity of perspectives and experience among those involved in movements for change. She describes “solidarity as strengthening our practice of direct democracy, our openness and communication with each other, our willingness to bring everyone to the table and give everyone affected by a decision a voice in making it” (Starhawk 2002:138).

Solidarity in Action

In contrast to an entrepreneurial model which is often used by academics and others in international programs is a solidarity relationship which Freire recognized as involving praxis, education for liberation for all parties, and transformation of oppressive conditions. Fraser (1989; Waterman 1996) refers to a similar stance as solidarity ethics. For this, we take our cues from the community and our bottom lines address structural issues—poverty, food, sovereignty, political voice, and equity issues—north and south.

This approach also demands that we work on engaging ourselves in understanding the roots of the structural inequities that people are confronting globally and our location in that system. When I was in Chiapas in the summer of 2003, I attended a workshop on Solidarity Economics and afterwards, I asked Jorge Santiago Santiago, the presenter, what he saw as the role of people from the north who were in solidarity with the social justice movement in Chiapas and I knew what he would say, “Go home and create the same movements for social justice in your own country.” Working *on* the belly of the beast is part of our sustainability challenge. Binford (1996:203–3) describes “practic-

ing the preferential for the poor” as linking investigative human rights documentation work with grassroots organizations, public education which gives voice to witnesses and their resistance to oppression, and scrutiny of the institutions that are at the forefront of the “New World Order” contributing to attacks on social welfare and growing disparities north and south.

The activists profiled below have influenced my work with Jolom Mayaetik. They all situate their work within the context of structural violence and foreground grassroots, collective approaches to solidarity and social change.

Paul Farmer and Pragmatic Solidarity

Farmer (1996) calls his approach to programs with genuine sustainability in mind pragmatic solidarity. The bottom line commitment is to attacking structural violence that produces the health outcomes of AIDS and TB that communities are experiencing in Haiti, for example. He notes that:

Many would now agree . . . that poverty and other forms of social inequality, including gender-based discrimination, are the leading co-factors in the grim advance of the world pandemic of AIDS. . . . Poverty and gender inequality are two reasons why the fastest growing epidemics are among women, who in some regions of the world already constitute the majority of those infected. Large scale social forces—economic, political, and cultural factors—are now placing millions of women at increased risk for HIV infection. At the same time, these same forces render much of the aforementioned scientific advances altogether irrelevant for most women at increased risk. As women living in poverty, they were already denied access to such goods and services before HIV came along to further complicate their lives (Farmer 1996:xiv–v).

Farmer discusses the work of Lurie who in 1995 called for alternative development and in the meantime, AIDS Impact Reports, which would require World Bank projects to stipulate the potential impact of loans on HIV transmission throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America. The World Bank’s response to these suggestions was that such proposals were antidevelopment and would mean a return to the Stone Age.

Farmer (1996:205) raises questions about “empowerment” rhetoric, the muting of the voices of those most affected, accountability, and anthropologists acting as “stenographers of power”—a Chomsky term. With respect to health programs, he criticizes their short term solutions approach, short-sighted agendas; few work in solidarity with

the poor to fight poverty. He also challenges the common educational intervention approach as one which can not affect rates of transmission if the major forces causing AIDS are economic, including destruction of rural economies and the subsequent migration, dissolution of sexual unions, poverty, child slavery, and forced prostitution.

For those of us doing transnational alliance work, Farmer (1996:298) profiles community-based organizations which “strive for a comprehensive approach to service delivery which helps HIV positive and at risk women escape the burdens of poverty” and which provide care and support for the HIV positive woman and her family. These include sites across the US and Mali, Thailand, India, Viet Nam, and Haiti where Farmer himself works.

Staying Alive—Vandana Shiva’s Subsistence Perspective

Vandana Shiva’s work with the Chipko movement and others in India also provides us with a community-based model geared toward sustainable living-social justice. Shiva and Mies (1993:303) outline “a vision of non-exploitative, non-colonial, non-patriarchal society,” and a subsistence or survival perspective which “did not emanate from research institutes, UN organizations or governments but from grass-roots movements, in both the north and south, who fought and fight for survival.” They discuss the Peoples’ Dam Movement in India as an example of community-based work that produced alternative development, water and food for the people, and alternative agriculture by drawing on the peoples’ knowledge, organizing skills, active participation in development, community control of resources, and critique of mainstream science and technology (Shiva and Mies 1993:311).

In working with the Chipko community, Shiva took her cues from the women themselves. She asked them what were the three most important things they wanted to conserve and they responded: “Our freedom and forests and food” (Shiva and Mies 1993:249).

I share Shiva’s and Farmer’s insistence on grassroots, democratic organizing with a focus on structural conditions—particularly poverty—and long term, committed solidarity relationships. Understanding the gendered nature of all social structures, including resistance movements, is another central focus we share.

Solidarity Economics of the Indigenous Mexicans—Desarrollo Económico Social de Los Mexicanos Indígenas (DESMI) Chiapas, México

At a workshop on Solidarity Economics, Jorge Santiago Santiago (2003) described his 30 years of work in conjunction with communities in Chiapas, Mexico. He said his emphasis had been on the permanent transformation of poverty through the indigenous people's use of their own perspective, alternative development, solidarity, and accompaniment. Fundamentally, his approach argued that if one person eats, then all others should be able to as well. Economics and politics were interlinked. Jorge argued that "if the project doesn't result in transformation of economic structures, it has no efficacy. This is reflected in relations of production and distribution of resources." He described a process where people work together to create solutions and to construct justice as historical subjects and actions which correspond to local conditions as they are affected by global forces and which result in constructing alternatives to neoliberalism. In sum, the basic elements include: search for development basic to human needs, development of the person and the community, solidarity-mutual help, construction of democracy, creating social enterprises and development which are local, technology and financing that serve the people, rights to work, health, rest, and a life with dignity, changing development to match the values of the pueblo, and popular education.

At the public seminar in San Cristóbal mentioned above, Jorge discussed his work in Chiapas in conjunction with DESMI and the Catholic Church. He also discussed the work of K'inál and its alignments and projects across Chiapas, and locally, the work with Jolom, as examples of solidarity economics.

Weaving Economic Solidarity—Accompaniment Process and Solidarity Continuum

The work of Jolom-K'inál has been both local and global, with solidarity networks spreading across Mexico, the US and Europe linked through shared interest in labor, human rights, Fair Trade, health, gender equity, and alternative development. Like the authors above, my work with Jolom and K'inál involves grassroots, democratic

organizing with a focus on structural conditions—particularly poverty—and a long-term, committed economic solidarity relationship. Understanding the gendered nature of all social structures, including resistance movements and how gender intersects with class, race, and culture is a central focus I share with Shiva (also see Kuumba 2001).

I characterize the solidarity relationship as a process involving alignment, consciousness raising and trust building through accompaniment, collective action and resistance-practicing oppositional politics, and economic solidarity. It begins with alignment-identifying one's self with an issue, a person, a movement, or an organization. This might have been preceded by a consciousness raising process which Freire describes as conscientization—the process of becoming aware of oppression in its social, political, cultural, and economic dimensions—and it triggers the process as well.

It is my intention and hope that community based work in Chiapas and in the Oneonta, New York community spark alignment. For some, working with the little children in Head Start makes them aware of poverty for the first time. Others see the impact of violence on families through work at the local domestic violence shelter and then learn of the same violence in Chiapas. Still others awaken through speakers, coursework, and mass mobilizations like the campaign to close the School of Americas. In 2006, after marching in Georgia, students returned to college and built a campus Wick Watch to recruit new members and to raise campus consciousness. Community-based activism and advocacy linked to coursework creates the potential of four years of aligned work while in school and the accompanying research arms students with experience and knowledge for the next phase of their work.

Because this work can be emotionally intense and we all come into in at different stages, I organize students in teams. Minimally, these teams provide shared transportation, course review, and outlets for fieldwork frustration; maximally, they function as support or affinity groups, particularly if students are connecting intense personal experience to community work and for those students who feel alienated from an apolitical campus, classroom, or community context. During this process, I accompany students through the course and related community—based work, community mentors accompany them in field sites, and team members accompany one another. In the work with Jolom, our personally-connected (see Della Porta and Tarrow

2005 on relational diffusion) but loose and widespread solidarity network offers minimal support to isolated solidarity activists, hence, my push for a more organized and localized structure like chapters of a Weaving Solidarity Network (see chapter nine).

Consciousness—raising continues throughout accompaniment with increasing awareness of oppression and commitment to challenge it and allows for us to conceive of concrete actions in concert with community partners. For many, this involves doing the day-to-day work that organizations require to keep going—from reading stories to kids to babysitting at a shelter. For my work with Jolom, this means doing banking, inventorying, shipping, emailing, grant writing, driving, traveling with members of Jolom, meeting US NGOS, and seeking out, organizing, and conducting major sales.

Moving to collective organizing and linking with local, regional, national, and international networks is the next stage of the relationship. Attending rallies, marches, meetings, conferences, speakers and organizing such events in concert with allies gives us the bigger picture—one needed to counter the often individualistic, disconnected, apolitical, and ivory tower nature of academia. For those who have chosen to work on transnational economic solidarity, this has meant doing inventorying, making tags, translating, fundraising, and developing and hosting Fair Trade sales events and anti-sweatshop fashion shows. At Hartwick, students working on Fair Trade have also become part of the campus anti-globalization and community anti-war movements. I participate in fair trade, transnational global justice conferences, forums, and the anti-militarization movement as well.

As mentioned above, our work takes place across borders and a specific target is attacking the poverty and marginalization of indigenous, Maya in Chiapas, Mexico. We have focused on economic solidarity and popular education with Jolom Mayaetik, Mayan women's weaving cooperative, through development of the marketing of Jolom textiles across the US; others have done so in Europe (see Tarrow 2005 and Della Porta and Tarrow 2005 on scale shift). Health, education, and reproductive rights projects are also part of the ongoing solidarity work. Taken together, the many people, perspectives, and voices involved across time and space produces many we's in our solidarity work and in the text that follows.

In the chapters to follow, I critically examine in detail issues in solidarity relationships including unequal power, ideological and cultural

differences and conflicts, BINGO (big international nongovernmental organizations) financial and ideological hegemony, and academic theory vs. praxis.

Accompaniment—the Method of Solidarity

My activist, feminist, materialist position shapes praxis in the process of engagement as well as methodologically (see feminist in Shiva and Mies 1993; Devault 1996; Mattingly and Hansen 2006; Naples 2002; Starhawk 2002); PAR in Greenwood (1998), CBR in Stoeker (2000), collaborative research in Lassiter (2005). I am in a solidarity relationship—a mutual relationship and a political act not directed by me as analyst.

Accompaniment—walking with one another through the process of mutual learning and deepening collective commitments—on the part of my Chiapas, international colleagues, and me is the methodology used to understand and enact our relationship; it is non hierarchical. Accompaniment is based on trust and respect and allows greater trust to potentially develop. Such relationships involve high stakes, sensitive insider knowledge, and emotional attachment and thus can also produce deep hurt and injury (Stacey 1988). Nash (2007) suggests that such activist relations can also produce complicity. Respecting the confidences and protecting the safety of fellow solidarity members are bottom line realities and commitments as well as aspects of solidarity ethics and ethical intellectual practice (Sanford and Angel Ajani 2006).

Accompaniment involves more of being a participant activist (Nash 2007) than a participant observer. Mies (1993) identifies this as a stance of conscious partiality. Activities related to facilitating the cooperative's goals take priority. There are moments when the purpose of a meeting, car ride, or conference is to analyze events together. Our discussions are mostly pragmatic. Occasionally, when we co-present at conference workshops—which means we must have someone stay back at the booth and continue selling—we have had the luxury of talking together with others about our transnational solidarity work and issues associated with it. In the US, the first order of business is business-schlepping textiles, arraying them for sale, discussing them, selling them, and doing the accounting. The Jolom women sell textiles at every opportunity possible. Second is usually eating, and the

third is logistics, community talks, and potentially meeting NGOs. It is exhausting. Having a little time to walk around whatever town we are in or visit with people and listen to music or see a film is contingent on time, transport, and our solidarity contact's time. Our first lengthy analysis together in a decade took place only in 2007. The outcome from that conference is discussed in chapter five.

Solidarity's primary goal is not to study solidarity but to do it and my core position in it is not as an academic observer but as an activist partner, *compañera*, and friend. I learned firsthand that our accompaniment creates our solidarity with one another in our struggle north and south.

When working with the cooperative members, we are involved in co-decision making to build trust and respect. The same was true for this text; I had to ask permission to write it; I asked to use the speeches of my friends; I asked several to read it, and the text was checked and edited at a number of levels by members of K'inol and Jolom (via translators) as well as others in solidarity. It is activist and collaborative (Lassiter 2005).

In order to tell their personal story, the women of Jolom Mayaetik have written their own oral history (2008) of the life course of Mayan women. In contrast, this book is not ethnography of a specific community in Chiapas but it involves localized specifics about Chiapas—based organizations, processes, histories, and US and Mayan cultures as they play out in Chiapas as well as in the US. It is an account of our shared work in multiple places that is both local, global—glocal (Escobar 2003)—and imagined in a community where activists from different places commit to economic justice work with Jolom. How connected people feel in our nascent network is varied and emergent. Having met with people in the Jolom-K'inol network from the US, Canada, Germany, France, and Spain, I can say we share a vision of economic justice, commitment to indigenous and women's rights, commitment to preserve indigenous culture, belief in alternative development, and a critique of militarization and growing economic apartheid. We currently have a wide range of passionate, localized responses to resource mobilization with coordination and communication through K'inol in Chiapas but not fully internationally coordinated. Feminist NGOs are part of the network through grants and project funding. As Manisha Desai (2002:15) suggests, global capital is multisided and multi-sited. In response, so, too, is women's agency from grassroots movements, to national NGOs, and international feminist networks; the organizing

travels (Thayer 2000) south and north. I use the terms global north and global south not as geographic terms but rather in political and economic senses (Mohanty 2003 suggests 1/3rd and 2/3rds world).

There are many moments in the decade—long process where I have had to ask for clarification in order to understand and know how best to proceed, how to present and characterize our work to others for grants or shows, and to decide what next step to take. There are also moments like this one where I step into the reflective position to frame the solidarity relationship in terms of theory on transnational feminism and antiglobalization and where I draw on the work of others to make sense of convergences, divergences, contradictions, and organizing insights. I am seeking to locate how “the relations of ruling” (Smith 1992) shape attitudes, interpersonal relations, and organizational priorities across the contexts within which we have worked. Identifying the macro foundations of micro relations (Burawoy 2000) and the intersection of race, class, gender in globalization—and resistance to it—is a theoretical goal and strategic, organizing necessity.

Chiapas—An Epicenter of Economic Globalization and Resistance

While Chiapas has long functioned as an internal colony (Collier 1996) for Mexico in terms of agriculture and timber, its large stores of oil, gas, hydroelectric power, and biodiversity, and large, poor, indigenous population have catapulted it into the front lines of global resource and paradigm wars (Mander 2006; Nash 2001; Eber and Tanski 2001). Indigenous resistance to enslavement, repression, land expulsion, and genocide has a long history (Stephen 2002) and has taken many forms. In order to enter into trade agreements (NAFTA) and to open up the Mexican market, Mexico radically changed Article 27 of its Constitution resulting in the privatization of collectively—held communal land (*ejidos*) and ending further land reform (Nash 2001). In 1994, a new wave of Zapatista opposition erupted and added to long standing civil society resistance movements. The Mexican government’s infusion of 70,000 troops and police into Chiapas was initially done to quell the unrest related to the 1994 Zapatista uprising as well as to guard the resources for the transnational corporations making large investments in the Central American biodiversity corridor of which Chiapas is a major part. Military and paramilitary personnel police the population and together with crushing economic policies

create a daily so called low intensity warfare of high intensity effects which represses resistance, the poor, and the indigenous (Castro in Speed and others 2006; Stephen 1999).

Chiapas with a 75.7 percent poverty rate, is Mexico's poorest state (North County Times 2007). The Mexican minimum wage is 45 pesos per day or \$4 US Dollars but in rural Mexico, more than ten million people earn less than 12 pesos a day—about one dollar. The ILO (International Labor Organization) reports that Mexican income is falling faster than that of any other Latin American country (Bacon 2006).

The Altos region where the Jolom communities are located lies in the center of the state. Its name derives from its location in high altitudes (see shaded area of map). This region has the largest concentration of indigenous people in Chiapas and the greatest number of municipalities in Chiapas in conditions of extreme poverty (Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) 2006). PHR studies have estimated that in municipalities with over 70% indigenous populations, approximately 80% of the population live below the poverty line and in conflict zones like the altos, the situation has been made worse by social polarization within municipalities, communities, and even families. 93% of the Tzeltal population in Chiapas lives in municipalities classified as having "very high" marginalization (PHR 2006).

In Chiapas, one of the states in Mexico with the highest concentration of indigenous people, poverty and lack of healthcare are reflected in poor health. According to official government statistics, Chiapas ranks among the worst of all Mexican states in terms of both infant and child mortality and has the country's highest maternal mortality rate and the highest proportion of mortality due to infectious diseases. Chiapas also has the highest rate of TB in the country and the highest death rate from respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases, as well as the highest rates of cervical cancer for women. Nationally, Chiapas ranks worst in terms of maternal mortality (PHR 2006). In terms of living conditions, 68% percent of the population lacks access to potable water; 62.3% do not have adequate sanitation. In conflict zone study areas like the altos, the proportion of homes with dirt floors is (74.4%)—twice the rate for the entire state of Chiapas (38.4%), and five times as high as for all of Mexico (14.8%). Nearly one third of households (28.5%) lack running water in the home (PHR 2006).

Chiapas has the second highest level of illiteracy in the country with illiteracy rates in conflict zones even higher. 23% of the population of Chiapas age fifteen and older has not had any schooling; 30% in conflict zones. 36% do not know how to read or write. In conflict areas, the average number of years of schooling is 3.4 (PHR 2006).

In the PHR study of conflict areas, gender differences in education were dramatic. Men over 15 averaged 4.19 years of school; 22% had no schooling. Women over 15 had 2.7 years of school; nearly half of women and girls over fifteen (43%) lacked schooling completely (PHR 2006). With respect to language, 48% of indigenous people in conflict zones do not speak Spanish and again gender disparities are evident. Across the three conflict zones, 61% of women as opposed to 36% of men are monolingual (PHR 2006).

Children's health also reflects the effects of poverty, lack of services, and conflict. Nearly a quarter of children lack complete vaccinations and stunting due to malnutrition affects 55%—the highest rate in the country. The level of malnutrition is 21% for underweight. Chiapas has one of the highest mortality rates due to nutritional deficiencies in Mexico and it also has the highest mortality rate for diarrheal diseases in children less than five years. In the conflict zones, the infant mortality rate observed was 39.4 per 1,000 live births, a figure nearly three times as high as the year 2000 rate of 13.8 for Mexico, and 12.0 for Chiapas (PHR 2006).

Women's Organizing and Resistance in Chiapas

When I first arrived in Chiapas, my focus had been on Jolom Mayaetik—the large, politically—independent, Mayan women's weaving cooperative with whom I had begun to work. Jolom members' mothers had been together in an early cooperative in 1984 and the current members had created their own cooperative in 1996. Jolom was known for its autonomy and political involvement.

Its sister organization, K'inál Antzetik, was also very visible in early cooperative development, training, and human rights work with indigenous women and in community activism against militarization and violence against women in the area. The co-founders of K'inál, Yolanda Castro, and Micaela Hernández Meza were the earliest advisors to Jolom Mayaetik and accompanied Jolom's birth; they continue to play key organizational roles.

Through working with these two organizations over the last decade, deeper layers of organizing were revealed and became clearer to me. I learned that K'inál was involved in inter-community organizing across Chiapas. Linked to K'inál and Jolom through shared personnel and civil society space but separate in level of organizing was the *Coordinadora*, a committee designed to sustain communication between civil society and the Zapatistas. All of these organizations had long and complex histories rooted in generations of organizing and resistance at local and national levels.

The recent activist work of indigenous, *campesina* (peasant), and *mestiza* (mixed ethnic background) women has evolved across multiple organizational and social movement contexts across time. The 1970s national feminist movement with an urban, middle class composition, had a liberal individual rights focus. While the 1975 United Nations Conference International Women's Year led to cross class interactions and organizing on the legalization of abortion, support for rape victims, and stricter penalties for domestic violence, indigenous women's rights were excluded (Speed and others 2006).

During the 1970s, women participated nationally in the movement of the relatives of the disappeared, leftist groups, liberation theology groups, and labor unions. In 1985, the earthquake in Mexico City brought many groups together and broadened feminist networks (Speed et al. 2006; Field Notes 2009). By the late 1980s, a national grassroots feminism had emerged which integrated economic, health, and political rights concerns for women (Stephen 1997; Field Notes 2009).

In the mid 1990s, the indigenous women of Chiapas and their non-indigenous feminist allies asserted the intersection of ethnic, women's, citizen, and cultural rights and women's autonomy within Mexico and indigenous culture. Gender and ethnic rights were conceptualized as collective and individual. Indigenous women were claiming themselves as both indigenous and Mexican simultaneously and asserting their own views on indigenous traditions (Eber and Kovic 2003; Speed and others 2006).

The first Women's Convention was held in San Cristóbal de Las Casas in 1994 with indigenous and *mestiza* women. In 1997, indigenous women shared experiences at the first National Congress of Indigenous Women in Oaxaca. Subsequently, some indigenous women were involved in Zapatista delegations in support of the San Andrés Accords in 1999 and in 2001 to Mexico City (Eber and Kovic 2003).

Throughout this period, indigenous women were literally in the frontlines of protecting their communities against increasing military and paramilitary violence. Indigenous women were and continue to be massively involved in grassroots organizing through the Catholic Church, cooperatives, civil society, and the Zapatista movement.

Catholic Church Women and the Word of God

Indigenous and *campesina* women organized through the Catholic Church as part of the group, CODIMUJ (*Coordinación Diocesana de Mujeres*—Diocesan Coordination of Women). Women's rights were seen in the context of liberation theology's defense of the poor as well as in the context of women's dignity. Local women's groups existed in the diocese beginning in the 1970s and in 1992 the commitment to women's rights was formalized in CODIMUJ. Diocesan work focused on antipoverty initiatives like cooperatives and stores as well as anti-domestic violence organizing (Kovic 2003:131–134). In 2000, indigenous women and *campesinas* of the diocese participated in marches, a forum against violence against women, and in the Zapatista *Consultas* (consultations, forums) of 1995, 1999, and 2000 (Eber and Kovic 2001:198).

As part of this diocesan effort, the nuns who are part of our solidarity network (see chapter 6) worked for decades in community women's *encuentros* (meetings) particularly on the topics of ending violence against women. They also helped establish a bakery and participated in analysis groups regarding neoliberal development plans.

The Emergence of Women's Cooperatives in Chiapas

Mayan women and their families experience tremendous economic hardship, including extreme rates of malnutrition, lack of running water and electricity—conditions which produce poverty—related illness like TB, intestinal problems due to unclean water sources, and high rates of infant and maternal mortality (SIPRO 1997). While Mayan women have always woven, their increased production is in direct relation to men's decreased earning capacity, the loss of land for crop production, falling wages, falling crop prices, cost of living increases, male migration and immigration, and rising poverty (Bello 1994:40; Public Citizen 2000; Witness for Peace 2001:10). Several models of artisan cooperatives emerged from government, Catholic Church, Zapatista,

and autonomous indigenous women's organizing and were developed to address economic issues and social mobilization.

During the 1940s–60s, the Mexican government organized PRI (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*—Institutional Revolutionary Party)—controlled cooperatives for indigenous handicrafts (Vargas-Cetina 1999) through INI—the National Indigenous Institute. Mexican politics were dominated by PRI for 71 years. INI encouraged women's leadership development in the 1970s (Eber and Kovic 2003:200).

Three of the largest and most well-known weaving cooperatives to emerge in Chiapas include: Sna Jolobil, J'Pas Joloviletik, and Jolom Mayaetik. Sna Jolobil, which emerged in the 1970's, was formed through the work of anthropologists, activists, and indigenous weaver, Pedro Meza, together with FONART, a Mexican government agency developing craft production. Vargas (1999:317) argues that Sna Jolobil's success stemmed from the fact that it organized as more of a business with a manager than as a cooperative. As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, Jolom Mayaetik split from J'Pas Joloviletik, another government—affiliated, INI weaving cooperative, over the relative importance of economic versus political motivations. Of the three, Jolom Mayaetik became the group to pursue social justice mobilization and economic development equally.

Artisan co-operatives continue to provide both married and single women alternatives to being exploited as artisans when they sell below production cost on the streets and to area shops. Young indigenous women who choose to migrate to the city and remain single longer also find cooperatives a space that supports their independence from family and community and that protects them from the racism and potential dangers of the city (Schütz 2006).

Castro Apreza (2003) argues that women's empowerment advanced more rapidly in the late 1990s in artisan cooperatives as women took on leadership, finance, and ownership that men previously controlled. She cautions that the increase in women's leadership did not always produce transparency, democratic decision-making, or solidarity.

In her pioneering work on women's cooperatives in Mexico, Nash (1993:149) points to the radical implications of Mayan women's economic and political organizing by noting that:

neither the government nor anthropologists have adequately assessed the explosive consequences of intensified artisan production with the increased autonomy of women as producers and sellers. As the class



Figure 3 Jolom Mayaetik and K'inol women speaking at International Women's Day rally, San Cristóbal, Chiapas, Mexico.
Courtesy of Jolom Mayaetik archives.

struggle moves from the arenas of formal production to the household, it becomes increasingly evident that this must be analyzed and incorporated in policies for change.

Research based on developments in Mexico in the 1980's (Nash 1993; Eber 1993; Stephen 1997) concluded that trends toward increasing cooperative development would continue based on continued land pressure, declining wages, declining returns on farm products, inflation, and persistent and high levels of rural poverty and hunger. The development of an organized resistance movement coupled with widespread political organizing by members of Civil Society organizations, the Revolutionary Law for Women, and ensuing increased militarization and repression, have combined to embolden Mayan women's cooperative efforts.

Jolom Mayaetik members participate in an array of national and international solidarity relationships (Keck and Sikkink 1998:95) through organizations and networks and challenge the continuing effects of low intensity warfare, racism, and genocide in Chiapas. While members of both organizations have participated in international arenas, and particularly, national indigenous rights congresses and gatherings (*encuentros*), their organizing efforts remain soundly grassroots—focused and “autonomous” (Alvarez 2000). Their civil society mobilizing efforts increased dramatically around 1999 in response to the Zapatista Referendum on Indigenous Rights and the formation of brigades to address key issues of privatization, human rights violations, indigenous rights, land disputes, and neo-liberal development plans. Given the severe economic conditions, militarization, and history of expulsion that exist in the altos, Jolom Mayaetik, whose members reside in highland communities and conflict zones, is at the forefront of the fight for survival.

Women's NGOS in Mexico

June Nash argues that NGOs and other civic organizations step into the structural and moral void during times when nation states are waning in importance. “NGOs proliferate under repressive regimes” (Nash 1998). Today, Mexican society is experiencing such a crisis with a counter-challenge coming in part from the indigenous people who have been marginalized. Mayans of southern Mexico and Guatemala are creating a notion of citizenship based on democratic, inclusive political participation, economic equality, and social justice. Central

to this organizing has been the work of Mayan women, who independently and with international groups and national NGOs, are creating a global network challenging the continuing economic exploitation, political repression, and rising militarization in the state of Chiapas. They are doing revolutionary work.

In charting the development of women's NGOs in Mexico, Tarres (1998:131–32) notes that until 1953 when women were granted the right to vote in Mexico, women were excluded from exercising formal politics. Today, many are still excluded. Usually their contributions take place in non-institutional spaces where the practice of politics requires another style. These exclusionary practices have fostered women's participation in both NGOs and new styles of practicing politics in contemporary society.

Tarres argues that the rise of women's NGOs during the 1990's in Mexico is rooted in the twin experience of women's exclusion from mainstream politics and their collective action. This history produces organizations which differ from traditional public groups and associations in that these NGOs are influenced by the feminist demands for challenging women's subordination and creating new gender relations based on equality.

Historically, the development of women's NGOs emerged within the context of civil society mobilization and networking which occurred in the 1980's, Catholic Church community work, "*comunidades de base*," (support communities) leftist organizing, and the delegitimization of the Mexican state's political and economic policies. Women's NGOs became "small spaces where alternative procedures for overcoming the subordination of women can be practiced and where women can experiment on their relationships with the public-political world, since these function as platforms of action" (Tarres 1998:134).

While it is common in Mexico to find a great deal of public criticism of state policy, Tarres (1998) claims that the women's movement in Mexico is unique in its questioning of the existing order and its contribution of new projects and practical solutions to transform existing social relations. NGOs have thus become an institutionalized space from which women can voice their demands and needs...and a specific mechanism for responding to the needs of women of different groups and regions of the country (Tarres 1998:134–35).

Women's NGOs developed at a rapid pace during the 1980's and 90's. By the end of the 1990's, 97 NGOs working around gender interests existed in Mexico. Most of these were concentrated in the area

around Mexico City with few being established in rural areas. In San Cristóbal de las Casas, 10–12 women's NGOs or women's teams within existing NGOs exist with the oldest being COLEM, an organization established in 1989 to ending domestic violence and rape (personal communication, March 2000; Eber and Kovic 2003).

In 2001, the Independent Women's Movement created the NGO, *Feminario*. It is composed of *mestizas* from various NGOs who engage in political and gender analysis, support actions to fight violence against women, and mobilize against neoliberal policies and development. Their critical and creative organizing is often seen tagging the walls of San Cristóbal (field notes 2009).

In terms of focus, at the national level, the majority of Women's NGOs are involved in health areas including reproductive, family planning, and mental health. Violence and human rights work ranks second in focus and those focused on economic and political development constitute a small segment of Mexican women's NGOs (Tarres 1998).

The story of K'in al Antzetik (see chapter 4) and its inclusive organizing philosophy centered on political and economic rights, follows the history of women's organizing in Mexico, a history which Yolanda, president and co-founder of K'in al Antzetik, was and is very much a part of first as a feminist and student activist in Mexico City. As discussed by Lynn Stephen (Rodriguez 1998), women have been central to all of the major movements for human rights, reproductive rights, democratization, land reform, students, and labor in Mexico during the last twenty years. In addition to the increased participation of women across movements, there has also been an increase in the number of women's organizations in Latin America and Mexico, often committed to basic survival issues for women and children and challenging women's subordination to men. Stephen (Rodriguez 1998:146) argues that "their work challenges the assumption that the issues of rape, battering, and reproductive control are divorced from women's concerns about housing, food, land, and medical care." "Feminismo popular" (Stephen 1998) with its emphasis on the intersection of economic, political, and gender equality, provided leadership, philosophical framing, public discourse, and organizational process for civil society development, women's grassroots organizing in Chiapas, Mexico, and specifically, for the development of the NGO, K'in al Antzetik (K'in al interview, 2000).

Zapatista Organizing

On January 1, 1994, the day that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect, the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN referred to as Zapatistas) seized seven towns in Chiapas. The Zapatistas called for democracy, land, and liberty and the end of the exploitation of the indigenous peoples of Chiapas. Women's organizing within the ranks of the Zapatista movement was substantial. Women serving as 30% of the Zapatista forces, in positions of command (Marcos La Jornada March, 2000; Stephen in Rodriquez 1998), and as sources of support in the countryside, exerted a powerful influence on civil society and on the rhetoric and the practice of the Zapatista movement. The 1993 Zapatista Revolutionary Law for Women and its demands for the right of participation in the revolutionary struggle, work and wage equity, reproductive freedom, political participation in free and democratic contexts, health and nutrition, freedom to choose marital partners, freedom from rape and domestic violence, rights, responsibilities, and roles within the revolutionary military and political posts also mobilized action. Given the large role of women in support bases, their substantial presence within the military structure, their involvement in *consultas*, marches, and *encuentros*, as well as the EZLN Revolutionary Women's Law, Inés Castro Apreza (Eber and Kovic 2003:201; Speed and others 2006) views the public appearance of the EZLN in 1994 as the most important event for the women's movement in Chiapas.

The impact of the Zapatista movement on the women involved with Jolom was heightened by the presence of Ramona, a Zapatista commander, official delegate to the 1994 dialogues with the government, and a Tzotzil woman who wore a *huipil* (traditional blouse) like those that the majority of women in the co-op make and wear themselves. For most indigenous women in the cooperative, the huipil is a marker of specific community identity and together with language signals cultural heritage. Thus, Ramona's dress sent a very strong message of pride as an indigenous woman from the San Andrés area. One member of the early co-op, J'Pas Joloviletik, said:

Ramona told us that we can, that Tzotzil women have that power; she told us that we have the power to go forward (Rovira 1997:172).

The Coordinadora

In 2000, on one of my trips back from the northern zone of Chiapas area around Tumbalá, our truck was flagged down and we slowed to see a line of cars and a crowd of villagers lining the street. I asked my *compas* (short for *compañeras*—*allies*), what's going on? They replied—Katarina, it's a *bloqueo*—a road block. I hadn't heard the term before but stopped cars and big rocks across the road gave me a hint. A man came to the window and asked for some money—money that would go toward organizing. The man started chatting with the driver and soon we hopped out of the car. Quickly, a fellow passenger and friend, was surrounded by men who were talking with her intensely. I was amazed by the throng of people. I asked my friend if I could have permission to take pictures. She asked and the people said yes. Next, I was escorted over to meet with the women elders and to check out the banners and speeches. The air was electric. After about a half hour, we got back into the car and were allowed to move ahead of the other cars and through the town ahead. Later, I learned that the roadblock which we experienced was taking place on major roads across the state of Chiapas at that same time. Its target was the privatization of electricity.

Another hint of the resistance movement came in 2001 when we were once again in Tumbalá in the north of Chiapas. We had come to visit the nuns at a clinic there and were making plans for mass the next day. I had heard my friends talking about the time of Fox—President Vicente Fox (2000–6) of Mexico—and the peoples' time which was an hour different. Since I was with “the people,” I dutifully changed my clock earlier than official time. I had wondered earlier if the resistance was literal or symbolic. It was as literal as the government's shutting off of electricity to much of the area of Tumbalá in reaction to the indigenous peoples' refusal to pay their electricity bills in protest to the privatization and rising costs that people could afford to pay.

After years in Chiapas, the roadblock might have been the first time that I witnessed a direct action of the *coordinadora* (coordinating committee of Zapatistas and civil society (non-governmental civic organizations), an organization that had been mentioned by friends and painted on walls in San Cristóbal but pretty much in oblique ways to me. Soon, after being invited to some meetings with community organizers, I began to get a sense of the broad scope of the social organizing that was going on.

In 2002, at a public forum in San Cristóbal, I met indigenous people who testified to being beaten and whose houses had been destroyed in the southeastern section of the state in Marqués de Comillas (see map #112). They told of the storming of their village, the destruction of stores, ransacking of homes, expulsion, deaths, and imprisonment. Like many such actions in Chiapas, the violent actions were related to land conflicts and part of a state strategy with paramilitary actions and apparent police, military, and state complicity. I also learned that members of Jolom Mayaetik—Mayan Women’s Weaving Co-operative and K’in al Antzetik, NGO-two organizations in Chiapas with whom I had been working—had accompanied members of that area in their quest for justice and compensation.

In August, 2002, I arrived in San Cristóbal to find a major demonstration in the plaza outside of the cathedral. I learned a new word-*plantón* (sit-in)—and found my friends from the co-operative working the food preparation for the hundreds of people sitting—in under a huge tent. I helped with getting the big pots of beans, rice, and tortillas together and later sat on the border of the tent having noticed the place buzzing with undercover agents and worried that any participation might trigger an expulsion like I had experienced already in 1999 (see chapter 3). My friends knew of my status and appreciated where I parked myself. The state government did not like the negative attention the weeklong sit-in on the plaza provoked and wanted it disbanded. The huge banners accompanying the sit-in at the plaza made the connection between the governor’s office and violence plain. They read:

Pablo Salazar (governor) is directly responsible for:

1. Counterinsurgency in Chiapas which causes division between and among organizations
2. intercommunity confrontations
3. violation of human rights
4. threats and intimidation in the Montes Azules biosphere region
5. realization of Plan Puebla Panama (PPP). (translation by author).

The signs also made it very clear who was organizing the challenge to these policies—“Long Live Civil Society in Resistance of Mexico.” Civil society refers to non-governmental and non-EZLN members of society; in resistance meant those opposing the policies of the government. Large painted murals also made explicit connections between US policies, global international financial institutions (IFIs) including



Figure 4 San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas 2002. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), USAID (Aid for International Development), World Trade Organization (WTO), transnational corporations, and the proposed development policies of PPP and the privatization, militarization, violence, and land expulsions that such policies were predicated upon. One read: “No to US military interventions in any country of the world.”

In popular education workshops convoked by the Coordinator of Civil Society in Resistance—the central organizing unit coordinating popular resistance across Chiapas and located in the central highland region, people were discussing and analyzing the San Andrés Accords, human rights, Plan Puebla Panama (PPP), the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), education issues, privatization of water, electricity and land, and the bloody expulsions of *campesinos* like in the 2001 Atenco resistance to the expansion of the Mexico City airport. When analyzing PPP, in addition to government and IFI actors involved in the “development” and ecotourism plans, organizers explicitly mentioned transnational corporations (TNCs) with economic interests in the resources of the Montes Azules bioserve. These included: Ford Motor Co., Walt Disney, McDonalds, Monsanto, Mexican corporations, and a US environmental group called Conservation International.

In 1999, the *Coordinadora de los Altos de Chiapas por la Consulta Zapatista* (the altos region, Chiapas, coordinating committee for the Zapatista Consultation—Forum) was established in response to the EZLN’s call to civil society to organize the Zapatista referendum. Later, the *Coordinadora* became independent from the EZLN and involved the coordination of grassroots actions in five regions of Chiapas on issues from human rights violations to land expulsions and World Bank policy as exemplified by PPP. It was headquartered in the *Altos* (mountain) region. In learning of these distinct yet interrelated organizing spheres, it became increasingly clear that that organizing in Chiapas was and is not only Zapatista—but broader. Most often the umbrella term used to describe this form of resistance was referred to as civil society in resistance and encompassed people from all backgrounds—housewives, union members, indigenous people, teachers, students, NGOs—all non-governmental organizations in alliances for change. The term civil society, while widely used, is abstract so some Chiapas activists prefer the term *pueblo* (village). Progressive mobilizations shared some organizing moments and members; my awareness of differences, conflicts, and distinctions emerged over time. People had to learn to trust me with information. When situations were difficult or confusing, I had to ask many times for explanations.

Of course, resistance has a long history in Chiapas—500 years and counting as one hears in most indigenous speeches. The famous advocate for indigenous rights, Bartolomé de Las Casas, named the horror of genocide and fought the church on its conceptualization of indigenous peoples and slavery. The modern phase of a 500 year + battle in Chiapas has its roots in *campesino* mobilizations from the 40's–60's, the student movement of the 1960's, indigenous organizing, and Catholic Church catechists' work as part of liberation theology (Field notes 2005). Indigenous women, while marginalized, developed their own gatherings and economic and political initiatives through artisan co-operatives, congresses, the Catholic Church, the Zapatistas, and everyday and collective forms of resistance.

Members of the *Coordinadora*, later the *Movimiento de Resistencia Popular del Sureste* (the Southeast Popular Resistance Movement (MRPS)—locate the current phase of resistance struggles in the 1970s over the forced expulsion of indigenous people from their lands in order to construct dams in the Chiapa de Corzo area for the development of hydroelectric energy that would be exported from the state. Activists from within the Catholic Church, indigenous congresses, women's, student, leftist, labor, and gay rights movements all became part of a vast and complex resistance movement in Chiapas. As one member of the coordinadora put it to us in 2005, the history of Chiapas is very complicated (Field notes 2005).

Civil society has stepped up to the organizing challenge and indigenous and mestiza women have been at the heart and in the leadership of this work. The work of K'inol and Jolom Mayaetik are part of this flowering of a grassroots, civil society resistance movement. As women-centered organizations, their role is unique in that they foreground a more radical, autonomous, and political women's and indigenous women's perspective—one missing in more traditional patriarchal-dominated organizations whether they are religious, indigenous, or Zapatista. Re-conceptualizing the peasant and peasant revolution (Kearney 1996; Edelmann 1998) in Chiapas entails recognizing the particularly powerful role that women are playing in all forms of civil society resistance and struggle in Chiapas (see Nash 2000; Stephen 1999; 2002; Hernández-Castillo 2001).

Much has been made of the large percentage of women involved in the core EZLN military and the Zapatista movement in general and the Zapatista Laws for Women are widely invoked, but as Marcos himself has admitted, the problem of gender remains a thorny one for Zapatistas. While some anthropologists have invoked a Mayan

cosmovision of complementary gender roles to support the claim that gender equity exists, Mexican anthropologist Mercedes Olivera (field notes 2002; 2005) argues that it has functioned as an ideological veiling. Observations of continued patriarchal domination in indigenous practices from coerced marriages, opposition to abortion, pervasive family violence, and male dominance of indigenous public space and political councils, including Zapatista, are widespread (field notes 2002; 2005; Eber and Kovick 2003; Speed et al. 2006).

What is the relation of civil society to the Zapatistas?

This question is often raised by visitors, including my students, as most people from Europe and the US assume that all organizing going on in Chiapas is Zapatista. The international leftist media also emphasizes this view. Colleagues in the *coordinadora* explained it to us in 2005 by using the metaphor of a road with two paths; I have also heard it explained as a tree with branches. What's meant by this analogy is that members of the civil society in resistance share with the Zapatistas the basic goals of indigenous rights, social justice, and ending militarization. There are departures in strategy—the Zapatistas focusing on indigenous, autonomous, Zapatista—only communities with outreach to civil society through the Other Campaign to communities across Mexico in contrast to civil society organizing across ethnic and political affiliations. Both groups are organizing with international networks with the Zapatistas having a virtual monopoly on US and European left analysis and media coverage. Although the *Coordinadora* and the MRPS worked with and had dialogues with the EZLN in the past, rifts became a rupture in 2003.

In 2006, the National Front for the Fight for Socialism (*Frente Nacional de Lucha por el Socialismo*—FNLS) formally emerged to consolidate grassroots, civil society resistance across southeast Mexico. The FNLS has its roots in the human rights movement of the 1960s and 70s as people mobilized to challenge the disappearance and torture of their relatives and worked to end the Mexican government's dirty war of repression of opposition groups and dissidents. One event which galvanized the resistance was the 1968 massacre of hundreds of students in Tlateloco Square in Mexico City. The repudiation of state-sponsored violence, disappearance, and assassination remains a

central focus and is represented in the FNLS saying, “Neither forgiven nor forgotten.”

The FNLS is a popular movement composed of 54 organizations working across the central to southern Mexican states including Chiapas, Oaxaca, Michoacán, Hidalgo, Veracruz, Puebla, Guerrero, and the Federal District of Mexico City. The goals of the FNLS include countering political repression, freeing political prisoners, challenging privatization, and transforming the capitalist and patriarchal systems through social mobilization. In contrast to the EZLN which is organizing primarily indigenous people who represent 30% of the population in Mexico, the FNLS is coordinating multiple Mexican resistance groups including indigenous peoples, mestizos, teachers, students, women, and workers across classes and political parties.

In analysis and focus, the core issues for the FNLS are class and imperialism. From the perspective of the FNLS, there also continues to be a movement of women and a feminist movement. Leftist women in the FNLS identify themselves with the movement of women and do not see feminists aligning with the FNLS in their critique of capitalism. Both movements share a critique of domestic violence (Field Notes 2009). The FNLS also recognizes the long term and deep involvement of women in early human rights campaigns and the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and class in all of the social movements.

As mentioned above, the Zapatistas and the FNLS are both engaged in struggles but in different ways. The Zapatistas are a substantial force but not the sole or majority oppositional group in Mexico or Chiapas.

Locating social change organizing only within the Zapatistas involves ideological and tactical problematics. Ideologically, identifying the Zapatistas as the only revolutionaries and everyone non-Zapatista as “other” or even paramilitary, helps feed the low intensity warfare that exists in Chiapas. As an organizer in the *Coordinadora* put it, “Everyone can’t wear ski masks” (Field notes 2005). This organizer argued that what was currently missing was greater international dialogue and recognition of the scope of grassroots resistance work. Since International Solidarity groups were working only with or principally with Zapatista organizations, other resistance groups were delegitimized. The organizer gave an example of how this is felt in the international Fair Trade movement where poor coffee farmers who are organized into Zapatista co-operatives are earning substantially

more money than *campesinos* in non-Zapatista co-operatives or with family plots (field notes 2005; 2009). Organizers warn of such rifts in indigenous communities and of rooting relationships in markets in general. The organizer in our meeting continued by asking, who will have power? She argued that power is a root reality between indigenous and *mestiza* women; the Zapatista movement and civil society in resistance, international solidarity groups and the people on the ground in Chiapas and that resistance would vary by regions and their histories so spaces needed to be created wide enough to include and embrace all different types of resistance. For her, the goal was to create a united movement with plural spaces including ones where indigenous women are heard—an ongoing struggle. She ended saying that resistance is the inclusive sum of movements (Field notes 2005).

The autonomy of Jolom Mayaetik has had its positive and negative consequences—in the global north and south. In 2003, at the alternative WTO meetings in Cancun, I was sitting at a session in the alternative Fair Trade meetings when, Tom Hansen, the founder of the US-based Mexico Solidarity Network came up to me. He asked if I knew Jolom Mayaetik well. I said yes. He then told me that he had heard that members of the co-operative had husbands or relatives who were paramilitaries. My jaw dropped at the outrageous allegation. In the context of extensive paramilitary violence in the region directed at indigenous people and meant to undermine communities, such a claim could elicit suspicion and justification for a death threat against Jolom members. The comment was outrageous in another respect in that members of Jolom had themselves been subjected to paramilitary violence and harassment (Stephen 1999; Santiz Diaz 2001; Hernández Meza 2001) and members of Jolom live in highly—militarized zones including the area of the 1997 Acteal massacre. I said I would immediately have to alert Jolom and K'inál to this claim. When I did, it caused an enormous shock. This rumor of paramilitaries was repeated across contexts in the US and was heard most recently in 2005 at a summer program with US Fair Trade students visiting Jolom and other co-ops in San Cristóbal. Such allegations endanger members of Jolom Mayaetik, de-legitimize the organization, torpedo solidarity efforts and economic trade in the US, and affect northern, progressive organization support and funding. As I mentioned above, Chiapas is complicated.

The following chapter examines the intersection of individual and collective rights and explores international rights frameworks and how the indigenous, women leaders of Jolom and K'inak speak of rights in their public speeches. I conclude by returning to the question of tensions between ideologies, worldviews, and practice as we work within and across cultures.

CHAPTER TWO

‘FOR A LIFE WITH JUSTICE AND DIGNITY’: INDIGENOUS WOMEN’S RIGHTS AND VOICES IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

We demand that indigenous rights and our rights as women are respected (President of Jolom Mayaetik Rosalinda Santiz Diaz 2001).

I always say that globalization can only thrive on the grave of democracy. So we ask the people of the North to discipline their governments and their corporations....The day you resurrect democracy in the US, we resurrect democracy here (Vandana Shiva 2001).

Rosalinda Weaves Resistance to Exploitation

On International Women’s Day, 2001, Rosalinda Santiz Diaz, the young, Mayan president of Jolom Mayaetik, delivered a testimonial before the World Court of Women against War and for Peace in Capetown, South Africa (See full text in Appendix 1). The Court, comprised of 3,800 women and men from the different provinces of South Africa and regions of the world, was assembled to hear global testimonials to the genocidal violence of the world’s wars. Roundtables presented on March 6–7 explored global contexts and personal texts on the themes of understanding the roots of war including the role of globalization, nation states and boundaries, racism and wars against indigenous peoples, trafficking and the war against women, and refugees and war. Roundtables for the second theme explored alternative notions of justice and peace and discussed truth and reconciliation commissions, international war crimes tribunals, reconciling memory, healing and peace building, and ending poverty. These roundtables prepared the assembly to hear the personal testimonials of 40 women on the next day organized in five sessions including Wars as Genocide, Wars without Borders, Wars against Civilizations, Wars against Women, and Voices of Resistance.

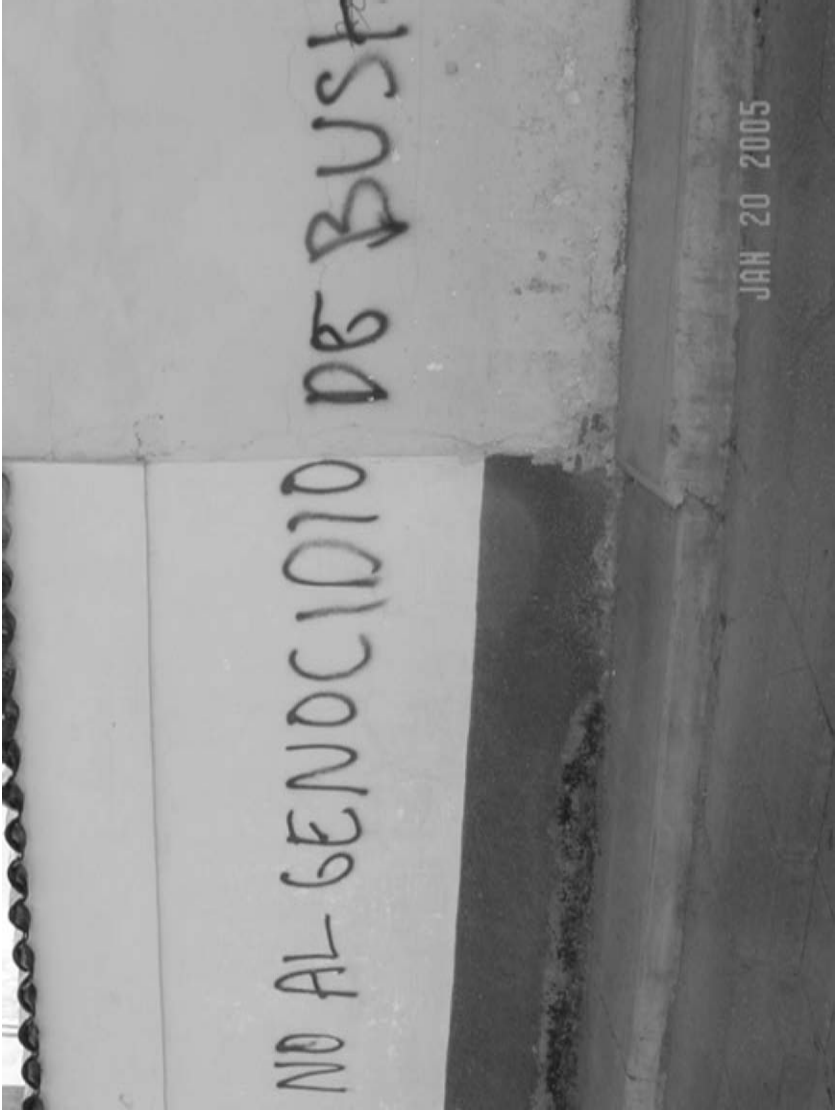


Figure 5 San Cristóbal de Las Casas Wall, 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

In the 3rd session, women who had survived institutionalized systems of violence like colonization, caste systems, and apartheid testified and Rosalinda began by greeting the crowd in Tzotzil and then told the tale of the exploitation of indigenous peoples in Mexico. She talked of social exclusion and shame for dressing in traditional clothes and speaking a native language. She also spoke about poor education, health services, and wages and the lack of drinking water and other public services.

In Chiapas and all over Mexico the indigenous people have been exploited for the last 508 years. We're not taken into account, we're not recognized. There is no good education for us and the health service is not sufficient and bad. A lot of women die of curable diseases or giving birth. Not in all communities exist drinking water or electricity. We're not paid a good price for our work. For women there are few possibilities: you get married or you work in the domestic service in the cities. In the cities our clothes and our language are despised, that's why some indigenous women lose their clothing and feel shame when they speak their language.

Next, she put the struggles of Jolom in the context of the 1994 Zapatista Uprising and the movement to weave "voices, thoughts, fights, and protests to construct our dignity." She detailed the effects of low intensity war including the 1997 massacre in Acteal, which killed 45 indigenous people, mostly women and children. Hunger, displacement, and loss of land were other results of the war.

That's why in January of 1994 the Zapatista Army of National Liberation started an armed uprising. Parts of Civil Society joined the fight for our rights and the indigenous culture. In these moments thousands of women and men cross different places of Mexico, to make a weaving of voices, thoughts, fights and protests to construct our dignity.

From 1994 on, young indigenous women have been fighting, so that our words are heard, that we follow our hearts and thinking. During these years a lot of us have suffered from persecution, militarization, paramilitary groups, hunger, death threats, sexual violations, forced displacements as consequences of the so called Low Intensity Warfare. More than 20,000 indigenous people have lost their bits of land, their homes and their working tools. For example, on 22nd of December of 1997, paramilitary groups killed 45 indigenous people, most of them women and children.

She also spoke of death threats to the members of Jolom for their political work and of the ensuing internal conflict. She attributes the split within the original cooperative to political repression.

Also in my organization we suffered repression, because never we limited ourselves to the production and commercialization of crafts. When we were participating promoting the social and political participation of women we received death threats and in two occasions they came into our store and robbed crafts and information. The repression led us to the division of our first organization.

Rosalinda also outlines the personal impact of internal, indigenous community opposition to women's leadership as well as external opposition.

Today I am not living in my community, where women daily have to live with fear. Now I am living in the City of San Cristóbal, but that's not easy either because it is another way of living and when I came I hardly spoke Spanish. In my community they speak in a bad manner because of the different traditions, for example in my community I am not allowed to walk alone, to laugh, I can't talk alone to a man and other things. When I walk alone in the City, people of my community say that I am only looking for a husband.

As I am participating in the fight of Civil Society I received letters with death threats, anonymous phone calls, I am shouted at in the streets, and in two occasions I have been attacked physically in the streets while I was walking with a *compañera*. They accused us to be Zapatistas.

Next, Rosalinda turned to the topic of challenging the existing order and spoke of demanding both indigenous and women's right to accomplish this.

But nevertheless we move forward, we want to learn new things, we go on organizing ourselves. We demand that indigenous rights and our rights as women are respected. We want a serious revision of indigenous customs and traditions in our country, so that those don't do any harm to our hearts, our bodies and our thoughts as indigenous women.

We demand the right to own land, to have good education, a good health service and housing with dignity. We want our languages, there are more than 50 of them in Mexico, to be respected, we want a good price for our work, we don't want to be forced to marry. We demand the right to participate in communal and municipal Assemblies and the right to take communal and municipal responsibilities as part of the authorities. We demand a life with justice and dignity without any violence.

We want to have a future where today's thoughts get reality: that's why we are in the process of building our autonomy, it's ourselves who decide what we want from naming our government by uses and traditions so that it is people's voice to have our own legislation. We want that the rights are known by everybody because often we don't know them. And we want to decide what education to give to our children.

Rosalinda described the process of building autonomy, finding voice, and making independent decisions. She called for education, health, and housing, adequate wages, and an end to forced marriages. She explicitly noted that women were also calling for revisions of indigenous customs and traditions which excluded them from public office and participation in assemblies.

She concluded empathizing with other women worldwide who suffered the consequences of "wars which hurt us so very much" and sent greetings from "all the indigenous women who are fighting in Mexico for a life with justice and dignity." She urged the audience to "join our voices and recover the strength of our hearts" and gifted them the colors of weaving thread to intertwine with dance and song in the fight for a better life.

In South Africa, when addressing an international audience of women's rights activists, Rosalinda interwove her indigenous voice, woman's voice, and cooperative's voice. She addressed the women of the world as well as international rights organizations. When talking about her personal experience, she used "I" and then switched to "we" when discussing the movement for change in Mexico, the resistance, and the struggle of the indigenous peoples. Her central focus is on the "we" of indigenous women.

But nevertheless we move forward, we want to learn new things, we go on organizing ourselves. We demand that indigenous rights and our rights as women are respected. We want a serious revision of indigenous customs and traditions in our country, so that those don't do any harm to our hearts, our bodies and our thoughts as indigenous women.

She concluded by saluting the struggle of all fighting women (Santiz Diaz 2001 See Appendix 1).

The holistic view of security that Rosalinda enunciates is shared by activists involved in the international campaign for women's human rights as well as by ecofeminists like Shiva and Mies (1993:297-98) who state that "solutions to the present worldwide ecological, economic and social problems... can be found in the survival struggles of grassroots movements" which emphasize "people-centered development, popular democracy and social justice." Women are central to this survival work. From these perspectives, security is a multifaceted project with economic, political, social, health, and environmental dimensions, all of which are interconnected, gendered, and affirmed in international human rights agreements. As summarized by WEDO (2002):

The basic principle of human rights affirms the dignity of every individual. Rights also empower people in the fight against poverty and for sustainable development. There is a growing recognition that protecting and promoting women's and girls' human rights not only improves their political, social and health status, but also contributes to the well being of family, community, and society.

*Micaela on Autonomy, Economic Development, Land,
and Women's Rights*

Micaela Hernández Meza, *Coordinadora* (director) of K'inál Antzetik, uses the "we" of indigenous women when she addresses the audience at an Anthropology conference in Merida, "*Somos varias jóvenes indígenas*"—We are young, indigenous women working in the K'inál organization in order to give support to the women of different communities and municipalities in Chiapas." (2001 Merida SFAA See Appendix 2 for full text). Later in the same speech, she invokes the collective indigenous and women's voice.

We struggle for autonomy—we want to govern ourselves with our own laws, to be recognized as Indian communities, respect for the right of our land, rivers, lakes, forests, the right to have an opinion on economic projects and to have the right to information to analyze and to know what we need to work on. We search for the right that we have as women not to be maltreated by our husbands or by any institution of the government, we want to participate in the indigenous laws in order to give awareness of our voice and the life that we want for our boys and girls.

In concluding her talk, Mica invokes the words of *Comandanta* (commander) Ramona, a Tzotzil woman leader already mentioned. After laying out the history of resistance to exploitation and militarization, Ramona concludes that the oppressors did not want to recognize that Indians existed. She uses this phrase to introduce the topic of indigenous women's rights:

We also have the resistance of some of our *compañeros* who don't understand the importance of women participating in the same manner as men. Because of this, the indigenous women have organized in order to support The Revolutionary Law for Women. To all of them we ask: Would it be possible to have what *Zapatismo* has come to be without its women? Civil society-indigenous and non-would it be the same without women? Can you think of a new and rebelling Mexico that we want to construct without our new and rebellious women? On the first of January, 1994, the Indians of Mexico told the whole nation

“Never again a Mexico without us.” But the Indian and the non-Indian women of Mexico have also lifted up our voice, we say: Never again a Mexico without us! Never again a rebellion without us! Never again a life without us!

Throughout, Ramona moves to include indigenous and non-indigenous women in her discussion of rights as well as a collective sense of indigenous women. Like Rosalinda, she has condemned violence against indigenous peoples making explicit that violence against women is expressed and practiced in economic, political, and military terms, as well as in domestic and cultural spheres.

Like their international counterparts, the members of Jolom Mayaetik and K’inal Antzetik identify racism, sexism, militarism, and economic oppression as sources of human rights violations. They also address sexist and exclusionary elements within indigenous culture.

These interconnections were made very clear by Rosalinda in her testimony before the World Court against War Tribunal held in South Africa (See Appendix 1 for full text). There, she argued that indigenous women faced many forms of structural violence including military and paramilitary repression, economic discrimination, hunger, lack of access to healthcare, and cultural degradation. Rosalinda condemned all forms of violence against women and saw types of violence as intersecting.

When Jolom and K’inal leaders speak in public, they speak of multiple and collective “we’s.” They voice a multiple consciousness—we of the cooperative itself, we of indigenous women, we of indigenous people, and sometimes Rosalinda uses a “we” which is collective, global, womanist, and transnational. The call for human rights is made in all of these voices. The transnational voice is usually expressed by the president in formal, public contexts or when addressing members of northern delegations.

Zapatistas and Women’s Rights

In Chiapas, the San Andrés Accords and the Revolutionary Law for Women address the intersection of lived experience, gender, and rights. In testimonials that I have heard or read, the personal experience of violations as indigenous people and as women is usually told with reference to the Revolutionary Law for Women or with reference to Commander Ramona from San Andrés where the majority of the Jolom Mayaetik cooperative’s women live. Violations range from

First: Women, regardless of their race, creed, color, or political affiliation, have the right to participate in the revolutionary struggle in a way determined by their desire and ability.

Second: Women have the right to work and receive a fair salary.

Third: Women have the right to decide the number of children they will bear and care for.

Fourth: Women have the right to participate in the affairs of the community and to hold positions of authority if they are freely and democratically elected.

Fifth: Women and children have the right to primary attention in matters of health and nutrition.

Sixth: Women have the right to education.

Seventh: Women have the right to choose their partner and are not to be forced into marriage.

Eighth: Women shall not be beaten or physically mistreated by their family members or by strangers. Rape and attempted rape will be severely punished.

Ninth: Women will be able to occupy positions of leadership in the organization and to hold military ranks in the revolutionary armed forces.

Tenth: Women will have all the rights and obligations elaborated in the revolutionary laws and regulations.

Box 1 The Revolutionary Law of Women.

land loss, poverty, health problems, rape, militarization, and loss of indigenous knowledge/property or theft of it by anthropologists, corporations, and IFI's. Personal violations like gender inequality within indigenous culture include arranged marriage, sexist division of labor, alcoholism of husbands, domestic violence, lack of access to land, and abandonment. Explicit reference to any formal rights frameworks, other than the Revolutionary Laws for Women, is not made often.

On the ground, I once heard a discussion with Zapatista council men where they were asked about gender inequality in Zapatista communities. Their response was yes-there are generational difficulties in views toward gender equity but—*poco a poco*, this will change. I also heard differences male/female in how autonomy was viewed.

The autonomous council men saw autonomy in political, economic, and educational terms. A female, non-Zapatista civil society representative added, "also our language and our dress."

Civil society organizers and academic analysts report continued household gendered division of labor and primarily male leadership in Zapatista and indigenous councils alike. Domestic violence is still widespread but punishable. Conventional, patriarchal structures within indigenous communities, civil society, and Zapatista autonomous municipalities are a reality. Marcos himself has addressed continuing gender inequities and struggles. At the same time, the struggle for indigenous women's political autonomy and leadership is unfolding.

Indigenous Women Speak about Rights Globally

At the International World Conference of Women in Beijing, indigenous women created a declaration (See Appendix 6) which criticized IFIs, corporations, and globalization and which argued for self-determination and respect for indigenous lands, cultures, and practices. The indigenous women's caucus document goes beyond the Beijing Document in noting that:

While it (Beijing) talks about the effects of persecution and armed conflict, it does not acknowledge that many of these armed conflicts are occurring on indigenous peoples' lands. These armed conflicts are the result of the aggressive actions of transnational corporations and governments to appropriate the remaining resources on indigenous peoples' territories despite the assertion of indigenous peoples to their right to control these resources (Third World Resurgence 1995).

Indigenous women explicitly called for an end to the dumping of both chemicals and contraceptives on indigenous peoples' communities and condemned family planning services like mass sterilization of indigenous women and coercive abortion programs. This stance on reproductive justice also called for a halting of dominant population policies. They also made a major statement about protecting biodiversity, indigenous knowledge and seeds, and called for an end to the Human Genome Project. Indigenous women clearly identified International Financial Institutions like the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO as architects of an economic order which results in genocide for native peoples (Third World Resurgence 1995).

The 'New World Order' which is engineered by those who have abused and raped Mother Earth, colonised, marginalised, and discriminated against us, is being imposed on us viciously. This is recolonisation coming under the name of globalisation and trade liberalisation. The forces behind this are the rich industrialised nation-states, their transnational corporations, financial institutions which they control like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). They will cooperate and compete among themselves to the last frontiers of the world's natural resources located in our lands and waters.

From their perspective, biopiracy is part of the ongoing colonization of indigenous land, resources, and practices—part of the process of commodifying all that is sacred. GATT (the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and TRIPs (Trade related intellectual property rights) are identified as destructive new instruments created by the WTO. Ethnobotanical research and the Human Genetic Diversity Project are also cited as scientific endeavors created to appropriate and destroy indigenous life. In sum, the document forcefully argues against neoliberalism's economic and scientific development projects and trade agreements (Third World Resurgence 1995).

It is an imperative for us, as Indigenous Peoples, to stand in their way, because it means more ethnocide and genocide for us. It will lead to the disappearance of the diverse biological and cultural resources in this world which we have sustained. It will cause the further erosion and destruction of our indigenous knowledge, spirituality, and culture. It will exacerbate the conflicts occurring on our lands and communities and our displacement from our ancestral territories.

The Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women is also a strong critique of the Beijing Platform for Action. It challenges the document's lack of a critique of 'The New World Order' and particularly, the omission of powerful colonizers and recolonizers who impose models for economic development (Third World Resurgence 1995). Overall, the document is criticized for perpetuating a western, corporate, agribusiness, assimilationist bias—one which hastens genocide and ethnocide (Third World Resurgence 1995).

The Beijing Indigenous Women's Caucus also condemned the Beijing platform document for excluding discussion of the commodification of indigenous women and issues relating to militarization and its link to rape, sexual slavery, sex trafficking, and a rise in STDs. Subsequent International Conferences of Indigenous Women like the fourth Indigenous Women's Congress in 2002 and the 1st Indigenous

Women's Summit of the Americas, in Oaxaca, in 2002 have reiterated the same themes—challenging the imposition of failed, western development models, militarization, and sexism within and across nations, ethnic and race groups—and called for indigenous self-determination and women's autonomy within the indigenous peoples' movement. They specifically name Plan Puebla Panama, Plan Colombia, NAFTA, FTAA (Free Trade Agreement of the Americas), the Cocalero Plan, the Andean Pact, and the Biological Meso-American Corridor as trade treaties which violate indigenous peoples' rights and they reject outright large development projects and military occupations of indigenous territories.

These same organizations and conferences have clearly enunciated a critique of violence against women and have identified this violence as interlinking in structural economic, political, and militarized contexts as well as within domestic and cultural contexts. The interlinking of these forms of violence and organizing resistance to violence in all of its forms potentially unites women's solidarity movements north and south and gives us a common agenda for action.

*International Law and Violence against Indigenous
Women in Chiapas*

In its 2004 human rights report, Amnesty International (AI) noted that indigenous women in Mexico faced discrimination at multiple levels including cultural, economic, military, and social. The report found that indigenous women were twice as likely to die during childbirth as non-indigenous women and that access to education continued to be extremely low and illiteracy remained substantial. They concluded that "indigenous women are the most marginalized of the marginalized" (AI 2004).

Within the realm of legal matters, for example, in the case of rape by soldiers, the marginalization of indigenous women intersects with the military jurisprudence system to make it extremely difficult for women to pursue justice and to prosecute perpetrators. Women's lack of transportation and their monolingualism in traditional languages make it difficult for them to access the criminal justice system at all. In the cultural realm, the report cites the continuing subordination of women to their husbands and their limited capacity for decision-making in the home and community. Traditional norms which justify

women's inferiority also play a role in undermining women's quest for justice in cases of domestic violence or rape by the military. Reporting rape can result in sanctioning and expulsion from the community. Amnesty International joined United Nations' bodies in calling for an end to the militarization of Chiapas and for an end to the continued impunity of the Mexican military.

The Amnesty International analysis calls for reform of the conditions which make the legal process and the judicial process inaccessible and calls attention to discrimination against women that is systemic within Mexican as well as indigenous society. It holds the Mexican state accountable for its violation of indigenous women's rights. It does speak of poverty and cites global capital's interests in the resources of the state of Chiapas but outlines no procedure for challenging economic violations. Given the lack of enforcement mechanisms within the Economic, Social and Cultural (ES&C) Conventions, and the new legal standing of corporate interests in light of NAFTA, if human rights mobilizing against discrimination resulted in a loss of corporate earnings, this could be prosecuted by the NAFTA tribunal as a case of lost future earnings and states and municipalities could be held responsible for monetary damages. New trade treaties and rulings of the WTO are challenging rights in every respect, including jurisprudence.

Transnational Solidarity Networks and Human Rights

When attendees at the 2003 Alternative WTO meetings in Cancún gathered at the Fair Trade Hall for the opening reception, Rigoberta Menchú stated that indigenous peoples were pioneers for millennia in the practice of fair trade. She said that when the UN emerged, it was founded on principles of peace, equity, and justice in development for humanity—goals of the Fair Trade Movement—but that the reality is a perverse system which benefits the few and hurts the majority. She argued that people in developing countries do not benefit from "Free Trade"—the agenda of the WTO that was meeting in Cancún at the time and the target of antiglobalization forces assembled there as well. Developing nations, for example, pay the highest price for the WTO including high tariffs. She concluded that the struggle for Fair Trade is the hope of millions for a life with dignity.

There is debate among activists regarding which human rights strategy is to be pursued, that is, whether to work within the UN frame-

work and hold states accountable or challenge the current structure of the UN and International Financial Institutions (IFI) like the World Bank. The Women's Global Leadership campaign to hold nations accountable for violence against women in domestic and war contexts succeeded in making explicit the intersection of race, class, ethnicity sexuality, and gender. Working within the UN and utilizing existing frameworks, the Women's Global Leadership Institute spearheaded by Charlotte Bunch campaigned to end violence against women using what Dorothy Thomas (1993:83) called a "Human rights methodology—promoting change by reporting facts. To do so, the campaign utilized the UN structure, testimonials and tribunals, and women's rights networks from the grassroots to The Hague." Whether such a strategy is also sufficient to challenge the systemic denial of economic and social rights that globalization creates is debated in the activist community. For example, The Beijing Platform for Action increased emphasis on social and economic rights and called for an end to gender discrimination in education by 2005. It did not, however, set targets for reductions in the feminization of poverty nor call for sanctions against the World Bank, IMF, or WTO policies (Kaplan 2001).

Shiva (2002) calls for a different strategy. She argues that with globalization, the strategy must be transnational and involve fundamental restructuring and reform of the UN including dismantling of key IFI's. In addition, a rights strategy must involve direct, grassroots, and transnational mobilization. The International Forum on Globalization also suggests radical reform of the UN including decommissioning the Bretton Woods institutions including the WTO, IMF, and the WB, strengthening the countervailing powers of the UN with the re-invigorization of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and creating new global institutions like an international insolvency court, finance organization, regional money funds, and a corporate accountability organization (IFG 2002:224–238).

International Human Rights Frameworks

Keri Iyall Smith (2006) suggests that western human rights doctrine initially emphasized the protection of individuals from the state, then offered positive rights for individual members of groups, and finally recognized collective rights. Sally Engle Merry (2001) also describes the expansion of the concept of human rights from the liberal notion of individual political rights and the state in 18th century France to

the end of the 20th century, by saying that rights discourse has shifted from individualistic toward more social and economic guarantees to health, water, food, work conditions, economic, cultural, and social rights of self-determination. Indigenous peoples have had a concept of rights which is collective and which includes sovereignty and freedom from violations resulting from political, economic, and cultural subordination.

In 1948, the US joined the world in signing the historic Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 25 states that everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living for health and well being of family and self including food, clothing, housing, medical care, and necessary social services. Article 23 states that everyone has a right to work, to free choices of employment, and to favorable conditions of work. Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration. Article 26 asserts the right to education. Despite having signed an agreement which outlines a broad range of fundamental rights including economic, the US tends to see rights in individual, political terms.

At the international level, human rights advocates have developed a series of agreements beginning with the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and including the Convention to End Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention to End Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Convention (basic food, shelter, etc.), the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child, and the International Labor Organization agreement-ILO 169—(indigenous rights including land, language, representation, culture, law) which outline the international consensus on rights. The US is the only G8 country not to have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights which contains articles on: the right to work freely chosen, the right to favorable conditions of work-fair wages, decent living, safe and healthy conditions of labor, right to form trade unions and the right to strike, widest possible protection for families, especially, mothers and children; right to education-primary, secondary, equally accessible higher education, and right to an adequate standard of living including adequate food, clothing, housing, improvement in living conditions, and freedom from hunger. The US and Somalia have not ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child which outlines a nation's obligations to its children. Those obligations include adequate housing, food, education, healthcare, and protection from violence and physical and sexual abuse.

At the 4th world Conference on Human Rights, The Beijing Declaration on Indigenous People (1995) called for the political and social rights of colonized indigenous peoples-rights ignored in trade agreements such as NAFTA. Freedom from military and police violence and for spiritual, cultural, economic, health (including reproductive), and political rights were identified.

During the UN decade devoted to Indigenous People, The Indigenous Peoples' Caucus raised grave concerns over many issues. They complained of the continuing battle to be included in consultations, meetings, agendas, and treaties like the Kyoto Treaty and the Food Summit. Indigenous leaders argued that the bulk of global bloodshed was over land and between indigenous peoples, multinational corporations, and international financial institutions and rights abuses included disappearances, forced migration, and genocide.

Indigenous peoples also objected to the racist language and process of the UN itself. In 2001, they objected to the wording of the draft declaration document for the World Conference against Racism (WCAR) which they argued denied them the right to self-determination. Indigenous representatives claimed that indigenous groups had been all but shut out of the decision-making process and accused the United Nations of failing to protect indigenous peoples in international treaties. Indigenous activists argued that racism and racial discrimination existed within the UN itself (Third World Network 2003).

While collective rights were acknowledged, the social and economic rights implications of militarization, economic globalization, and environmental racism including biopiracy, mining, drilling, dumping, and other land practices which disrespected and disrupted traditional, indigenous economies, culture, and spirituality were not resolved. WCAR resolution 381 urged nations and financial and development organizations to examine their policies as they produced negative effects on indigenous peoples and suggested that such institutions mitigate these effects by seeking the consent of indigenous peoples in development projects, develop enforceable codes of conduct for transnational corporations and international financial institutions, meet human rights standards, and consult with indigenous peoples on any matter affecting their spiritual, physical, or cultural integrity (Third World Network 2003).

In addressing the connection between human rights violations and economic development, Professor Stavenhagen, Special UN Rapporteur, reported serious human rights violations committed by

governments in conjunction with mega development projects. He noted that indigenous peoples had been severely affected by dam development that resulted in environmental destruction and land expulsions. Displaced indigenous peoples from many countries including Mexico, the Philippines, and Chile had not been compensated for their losses (Stavenhagen 2006).

In 2004, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recommended an amendment to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) making explicit reference to indigenous women and to the gender dimensions of racial discrimination. It noted that indigenous women had not been discussed in the context of CEDAW and that the gender dimension of racial discrimination needed special attention.

While the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger is the top UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG), what form economic development takes is hotly contested globally. At the fourth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, May 2005, international indigenous organizations emphasized that poverty for indigenous peoples involved the denial of economic, social, and cultural rights. They expressed concern over the exclusion of indigenous peoples from the poverty reduction strategy papers that governments submit in order to get development funds through The World Bank. They also noted the lack of meaningful participatory mechanisms for indigenous peoples with respect to the World Bank policy of substituting consultation for consent—a move which violates the principle of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)—a cornerstone for the exercise of indigenous self-determination. The Permanent Forum called on UN agencies to create special funding and incentives for indigenous organizations doing informal education specifically for women and girls. They also recommended that states concentrate on poverty reduction strategies which focus on indigenous youth and provide expanded employment opportunities for indigenous women.

Indigenous rights activists utilized the UN Decade on Indigenous Rights to mobilize support and highlight the disastrous clash of globalization and indigenous sovereignty. Their work identified key areas of indigenous rights with respect to states including development, economics, indigenous territories, social and political organization, valuing indigenous identity, and developing a platform to promote indigenous interests. After more than twenty years of work, the UN Human Rights Council adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights

of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. The US, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada voted against it.

Movement for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and Sovereignty

Vandana Shiva (1995) suggests that since trade talks at the GATT, Uruguay Round, and the creation of the WTO in 1995, all issues related to culture, values, food, ecology, knowledge, and democracy have been drawn into the global economy as matters of trade. This means that women from the Global South, even from the remotest mountains of Chiapas or the Himalayas, confront patriarchal, international financial institutions, governments, elites, and corporations. Shiva argues that gender analysis must assess the impact of IFI hegemonic influence on views of development, economics, and the projects which emanate from that particular worldview and advantage white, patriarchal systems in the rich, global north. IFI's which produce "development" projects which increase the feminization of poverty or which privatize food, clean water, and housing, fail to consider women's and global realities. She suggests that mainstream, global north thought still holds that neoliberal development will produce equality for women through economic integration. From her perspective, the socio-economic impacts of privatization, sweatshop labor, patenting, and the control of food systems are overlooked. While structural adjustment is analyzed as negatively affecting women even by the World Bank itself, the dominant northern rhetoric continues to be one of empowerment of individuals by living in neoliberal, "free market" systems.

Women's organizing in Chiapas is on multiple fronts: economic organizing in the cooperatives, political—including marches, sit-ins, roadblocks, and resistance to electricity privatization, and symbolic resistance to government in actions like naming "the time of Fox." Jolom women participated in the Cancun alternative WTO and also participated in national, regional, and international women's and indigenous women's rights conferences, networks, and congresses. In international arenas, Jolom representatives have delivered official testimony on the impact of war on indigenous women. Finally, K'inol and Jolom are networking through various international, human rights groups like Madre and other human rights/antiglobalization networks. While both rely on grants from external sources, Jolom's growth, increased production, textile innovation, wholesale and international marketing,

and increased revenue are autonomous and facilitated by the solidarity network. Neither organization is sitting at the international conference table making policy but as mentioned earlier, both organizations are represented in national political organizing and international networking. In 2007, this participation was reflected in a major FNLS National Women's Encuentro of grassroots organizers from across Mexico as well as representatives from Nicaragua, US, Spain, and France at the Center for Training and Education in San Cristóbal and participation in the first US Social Forum in Atlanta.

The themes of indigenous and women's autonomy, economic justice, and dignity are linked by the cooperative's leaders and members and enunciated by the cooperative's leadership in speeches and at demonstrations and by the members across contexts. Indigenous, mestiza, and women from the global north are building transnational networks to challenge neoliberal policies and to create social justice for indigenous women, their families, and the world. In creating alternative economies and political realities, women are also challenging traditional indigenous practices and Mexican society, both of which have restricted indigenous women's voice and autonomy.

Cooperative and collective organizing as fostered and practiced by Jolom and K'inál sometimes clashes with more individualistic values and orientation. Such clashes occur within the cooperative as well as between the Chiapas-based groups and US global North organizations whose dominant ideological frame is usually individualistic. Similarly, a deep tension exists between views that value the commons, sustainability, and community more than individual conceptions of license and profits. The emerging tensions between indigenous women and men, as women assert their rights, or younger cooperative members, as they necessarily assert their independence as individuals, create potential rifts as well as strengths in the collective fabric—a tension that Jolom, K'inál, and the communities are confronting. These tensions also create new possibilities. Similarly, those of us in the north will have to learn the lessons about collective interests, the commons, and the fact that our survival is contingent on our collective needs, too.

These tensions play themselves out in many ways in our transnational relations as well. I conceptualize the differing senses of consciousness and ideology in key areas of feminist transnational activism where we have been working in the following ways:

	<u>Collective Cooperative Frame</u>	<u>Individualistic Frame</u>
Money	collective impact;socialize costs	individual profit appropriation
Repro rights	emphasis on structural equity - lowering maternal and infant mortality	individual access to family- planning and abortion
Rights	collective sovereignty& autonomy Social and economic rights	individual freedoms individual rights
Population	consider racist dimension of forced sterilization- genocide	control overpopulation of the poor
Poverty	Structural violence	individual differences and luck

Figure 6 Continuum of Rights.

At many points over many years of transnational solidarity work, value conflicts emerged. At a recent Fair Trade conference in Chicago, participants discussed the economics of fair trade. In the Fair Trade arena, some northern solidarity marketers that I encountered were willing to ask the cooperative to lower its prices so their stores could make more individual profit or so that Jolom's prices would be more in keeping with other fair trade items from places like India. Balancing the books on the backs of the producers violates the concept of a living wage, Fair Trade, and solidarity. In the Global Health Partners project (see chapter seven), we had to make the case that reproductive rights were linked to Fair Trade, fair wages, and indigenous women's dignity.

In the academic realm, when the theme for the year at the American Sociological Association (ASA) Conference was Public Sociology, I requested that the ASA consider changing its 1992 exhibit policy and fee structure to permit Jolom Mayaetik to sell its textiles during the ASA Annual Meeting. My request was denied on the basis that exhibits

must be of a nature that they can reasonably be considered to be 'tools of the trade' by sociologists acting in their professional capabilities as faculty, students, and/or sociological practitioners.
(Minutes ASA Council Meeting February 4–6, 2005 (#52861))

Janet Astner, Director of Meeting Services Deputy and Executive Officer for Administration, stated that the primary guideline used in determining exhibit space was the "tools of the trade" criterion and she was against "broadening the gateway" (Minutes of ASA Council Meeting February 4–6, 2005 (#52861)).

She noted the importance of maintaining "the professional nature of ASA exhibits" and ensuring "that the exhibit experience of the scholarly publishers, who have long supported the Association and the discipline, is not downgraded" (Minutes ASA Council Meeting February 4–6, 2005 (#52861)). The ASA committee members concurred.

She did suggest that individual members could have a personal interest in such items and developing a future, separate marketplace to house such items could be explored as long as displays did not jeopardize professional book exhibits. She also suggested a 50% reduced booth fee for such non-profit, non-academic organizations. If doing public sociology involves economic justice work as sociological practitioners, our academic conferences can be a part of that effort as is the case with the ASA booking conference sites with a policy of union preference in mind.

Since 2000, we have been marketing Jolom's items at the Society for Applied Anthropology Association meetings and the association has been very realistic with fees and supportive of the collective interests of the cooperative. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) has a profit and a non-profit organization fee scale, although the fee is still very high given the exchange rate of 15 pesos to one dollar US and the income generated by an organization like Jolom. The US solidarity group has accommodated this by splitting the costs with another organization and by absorbing the booth costs ourselves.

Rosalinda's International Women's Day speech (See text Appendix 4) links the historical struggles of garment workers in the US to Mayan women's struggle for autonomy and rights. Vandana Shiva tells us to resurrect democracy in the north and the south will resurrect democracy there. Linking our movements by moving away from the sentiment of charity to economic solidarity and acknowledging and working across these power relations is necessary to create genuine movements for social and economic justice in our own country as well as transnationally.

Jolom's participatory democracy, autonomous political alignment, consensus decision-making, cooperative economic structure, and indigenous women's leadership solidly align it with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour's call that MDG strategies be rooted in human rights-rights which are collective and involve self-determination (IWGIA 2006).

Given the growing disparity in wealth nationally and globally, resistance to it is taking multiple forms, from reactionary (Kimmel 2000) to revolutionary. Organizers north and south recognize structural and global shifts, the specific gender, race, and class nature of inequality, and the need to respect peoples' basic social, economic, and cultural human rights. These rights include access to food, clean water, shelter, healthcare, education, and reproductive freedom.

If terrorism is defined as the targeting of innocent civilians, instead of thinking of terrorism in only military target terms, it is time to consider our global and national economic policies as forms of economic terrorism or structural violence. From World Bank/IMF/WTO development policies which favor export-driven economies with sweatshop factories (*maquilas*)—a trend which occurs worldwide—to structural adjustment programs like Welfare Reform which diminish government assistance in basic social services and which seeks to privatize basic necessities, to economic embargoes like those in Iraq

and Cuba which target civilian populations, the impact is greater disparity in wealth worldwide and in the US, increasing poverty, hunger, homelessness, and TB—for the global south and for post-welfare US, too. We should stop using euphemisms like development or structural adjustment or welfare reform to describe these conditions and confront them as gross human rights violations.

If we-allies and activists in the global south and north—are committed to grassroots mobilization which emphasizes “people—centered development, popular democracy and social justice” (Shiva and Mies 1993:297–98), we need to challenge how we talk, think, and act on consciousness, rights, and the linguistic euphemization of neoliberal violence (Bourdieu 1998). Doing so might give us some necessary strategic insights into our movement strategies, vulnerabilities, and goals. In part, this critical examination entails re-conceptualizing gender politics as embedded in domestic and global relations that are both structural and transformative (Shiva 1995).

In the next section of the book, I explore the various social movement actors and organizations involved in our solidarity network’s organizing. I begin by locating myself in the context of working in a conflict zone.

PART II

WEAVERS

CHAPTER THREE

'YA GOTTA KNOW WHEN TO HOLD 'EM': REFLECTIONS ON FIELDWORK IN THE *ZONA DE CONFLICTO* (CONFLICT ZONE)

Reading Cosmic Signs

As the cab drove through the outskirts of Tuxtla Gutiérrez and began its ascent into the mountains toward San Cristóbal, I looked up in the clear night sky. This was 1999, my spring break and also the occasion of the Zapatista—sponsored referendum on Indigenous rights. This time, I was to meet with members of the women's co-op with whom I had been in correspondence during 1998–1999.

The night air was chilly and the stars were brilliant across the top of the expansive valley. At first, the mountains, back—lit with storm—inspired magenta, caught my eye. Then, I noticed a pattern of stars in the sky—a pattern that I had never seen before. It was a question mark—a huge question mark curled across the night. I had no idea what this was—nor did I ponder a deep interpretation, but I did think it was curious and I noted it in my journal when I got to the room.

I was to learn that this question mark was the constellation of Scorpio. At the time, had I been open to Mayan conceptions of the cosmos, I could have read this constellation as portending my travel into the path of awe, of the unknown and unconscious, and into a confrontation with hubris. The Scorpion snake forewarned my tumble into the Chiapas, Mexican, underworld “place of fear” (Tedlock 1985: 34) that I had yet to experience. My consciousness of the layers of unseen and unpredictable forms of power and control that exist in conflict zones was changed by conditions of military scrutiny and control of travel, immigration policies of monitoring and surveillance, and low intensity warfare carried out by paramilitary organizations.

MineFieldwork—Working in Conflict Zones

During the early years of work in Chiapas, internal religious and political battles made some of the villages off limits at various times.

My ethnographic work is multi-sited (Marcus 1998). Photo documentation, organizational primary materials including e-mail messages, documents, and bulletins, and magazine articles and books published locally in Chiapas inform my analysis as well. We use email to stay in touch throughout the year. An issue which affects my interaction with Jolom's members who live in the mountain communities is my lack of Tzotzil. Presently, all of the Jolom cooperative representatives speak Spanish, but the cooperative's members in the villages are overwhelmingly monolingual speakers of Tzotzil or Tzeltal, therefore, during meetings and visits in villages, all interactions are conducted in Spanish and translated into Tzotzil or Tzeltal. No members of Jolom speak English. K'inál is composed of indigenous and non-indigenous members from Chiapas and individuals from Europe and the US. All members speak Spanish; indigenous members also speak their mother language.

In 1997, I began my work in Chiapas as a tourist, visiting the major Mayan sites in the state, learning Spanish, and meeting faculty and community leaders in areas that I wished to develop for future college program intercultural study there. With more work and study, my status shifted from tourist to student. Long term, committed work within Jolom and K'inál in US and Mexican contexts which linked my twenty years of activist work and research on rural poverty and women's reproductive rights, changed my role to one of solidarity with my colleagues.

In developing this book, I draw on observations from early visits to Chiapas in March and July, 1997 as well as interview and participant observation ethnographic research and activist work in Chiapas and across the US from 1998 to 2009. During April, 2000, I also met with my Mexican colleagues in the US and participated with them in meetings, sales, discussions, and a teleconference with the World Bank. I took student delegations to Chiapas during January 1998, 1999, 2002, 2005, and 2009. We had joint conferences in Chiapas during 2007. This work is ongoing.

Since 2001, my work context has shifted to the US as it is the major market for Jolom textiles and developing markets is the cooperative's expressed responsibility for me. This relationship continues and my economic solidarity work includes networking in the north, documentation, fair trade market development and sales, popular education, advocacy, and grants. Together we are forging a relationship informed by what I would call a critical, feminist, activist stance.

Activist scholars are engaged in struggles over power, strategy, alignment, networking, and bottom line-bread and butter structural change. Analyzing the varying perspectives or voices of different constituencies, adequately capturing that diversity, acknowledging our responsibilities to the people with whom we work, and using that work to benefit our communities are ethical commitments.

The work of indigenous, *mestiza*, and global north activists has to be understood within multiple, embedded cultural contexts; failing to do so runs the risk of missing the context-specific effects of globalization on indigenous peoples as such effects manifest themselves in village politics as well as macro level policies like structural adjustment. Understanding the impact of power relations, specifically on indigenous women, from local to global levels, hinges on placing those relationships simultaneously within the social context of indigenous culture and worldview and global context. All aspects of the globalization-antiglobalization relationship—social reproduction, resistance, and rebellion—are raced, classed, and gendered. In order to develop genuine, informed, effective, and just collaborative analyses for policies of intervention and change, we have to scrutinize the matrices of power, privilege, and empowerment.

My work in Chiapas examines women's resistance to globalization and militarization through active community building and independent organizing for the dual purposes of economic and political autonomy. My colleagues in K'inál Antzetik, a grassroots human rights NGO and its sister, Mayan women's weaving co-operative, Jolom Mayaetik, are highly visible organizers in Chiapas, Mexico; they are recognized internationally as well. They/we are negotiating post-NAFTA economies and constructing alternatives to capitalist globalization as we know it. Forging such collaborative relationships is difficult—particularly within revolutionary and conflicting circumstances characterized by surveillance and military occupation.

While critical ethnography can capture the history and contemporary conditions of inequity and oppression, I agree with advocates of an anthropology and sociology exercising the preferential option for the poor. Binford (1996:202–3) suggests such a stance entails

Struggling and working closely with grassroots organizations in the investigation of human rights abuses,...scrutinizing the institutions and agencies that are at the forefront of the 'New World Order,'...working actively in [our]own communities to oppose the growing assault on social programs such as welfare, public education, and public

housing...dedicating more time to translation and dissemination of materials produced by people who have little or no access to a larger public in the decision-making imperial centers and sponsoring, as well as speaking tours in which witnesses testify directly to the chaos being wreaked upon them as well as their resistance to it, and finally, it means working within colleges, universities, and other institutions to increase the representation on faculties and staffs of people of color beyond the token level so as to sharpen anthropology's internal critique...

Activist work as described by Participatory Action Research (Greenwood, 1998) and Feminists (Shiva 2000; Eber and Tanski, 2001; Schepper-Hughes, 1992; O'Donnell 1993; Naples 1998) share similar assumptions.

Inherent dangers are part of much fieldwork and include potentials for misrepresentation, not being able to identify the unspoken or the partial transcript (Scott 1985), taking for granted the power bases that shape interaction style, outcomes, and perceptions (O'Donnell 1993), or being able to hold people hostage or hurt them worse with the increased knowledge and emotional bonds that are created in long term relationships (Stacey 1988). Fieldwork in regions like Chiapas where low intensity warfare exists raises even more serious ethical concerns as outsiders bring potential threats to one's colleagues and communities. They also bring the potential for getting suppressed messages out to the world, a practice that my colleagues and other members of the civil society in Chiapas, as well as human rights organizations, are actively fostering and cultivating via email bulletins, websites, public marches, testimonials, conferences, and US tours. These are matters of life and death.

Specifically, with respect to research in Mexico, foreigners who engage in activities not specified in their visa are subject to 'deportation' under the *Ley General de Población*, (General Population Law), a statute that regulates immigration. Such conditions restricting travel and immigration can limit time in the field, area of study, and movement within the country.

In the late 1990's, the military and paramilitary occupation of Chiapas disrupted and destroyed indigenous peoples' lives and work and made even travel to one's corn, squash, and bean field (*milpa*) difficult. Checkpoints, surveillance, troop incursions and paramilitary violence were routine and dangerous. The continuing militarization of the highlands and immigration policies restricted foreigners' access to indigenous communities. Entry was problematic. In order to deal

with these early prohibitions, I traveled to one village with a Jolom Mayaetik cooperative organization in a non-restricted area and also met with co-op members as they worked in their store and office in San Cristóbal. I also traveled by back roads with co-op members into other areas. In addition, Jolom's board of directors and other cooperative members have migrated from their villages to live in San Cristóbal.

Learning Military Etiquette—TOPES and Checkpoint Cha Cha with Lt. Martinez

Topes are speed bumps which dot the road system of Mexico. They are meant to slow you down as you travel into and out of villages or small crowded streets. Military checkpoints function in much the same way as obstacles, and clearly deterrents to travel.

My initiation into military etiquette was an abrupt one. In 1997, in preparation for a Hartwick College course that I developed, I invited Jeanne, a colleague, to Chiapas for the first time. While military personnel were omni—present in the cosmopolitan city of San Cristóbal, and their M-16 guns got my attention, one would not get an adequate conceptualization of the degree of militarization in Chiapas without travel to the mountains or the jungle.

On the way to Tonina, a dramatic and large Mayan temple complex located an hour east of San Cristóbal, in the state of Chiapas, my friend and I got our first personal wake up calls about the degree of military buildup. Traveling along the main road, we encountered convoys of trucks carrying scores of uniformed, armed soldiers. Such sightings were routine. What did not appear casual was the level of construction that was occurring at an army base along the main road en route to Tonina. There, we saw multiple barracks, tanks, and helicopters all behind heavily—guarded fences and watch towers. On approach to the temple complex site, we encountered our first checkpoint. The soldier asked politely for our passports and visas. I was driving the small VW that we had rented, and realized at that moment, that my documents were in a money belt underneath my dress. With half a dozen soldiers watching our moves, I had to improvise a path to my papers without lifting my skirt. I asked Jeanne to proceed first. We each produced our documents and the captain took them inside the building and began a computer and phone check. Fifteen minutes of hushed conversation between us and intentional inattention to the other soldiers who were making comments, passed. Soon, we were free to proceed.

Our next wake-up call occurred shortly after when I was negotiating a narrow dirt road with a large gully on the right, when I heard a deep, rumbling noise. A moment later, the long nose of a rocket launcher was heading toward us on the same slim slip of a road. A panicked scream later, he veered off down the gully, his huge, tank tire tread wheels towering over the small VW bug. On this site-seeing excursion, I learned first-hand of the military build-up outside of Ocosingo at one of the portals to the Lacandon jungle, a site of substantial military and paramilitary action and indigenous resistance.

January, 1998, was a particularly sensitive moment to be in Chiapas, as the massacre at Acteal had just taken the lives of 45 highland Mayan residents, mostly women and children. Such a disaster had brought renewed international media and human rights attention and visibility to the conflict zone, and produced new levels of military and government vigilance and control. When members of my Hartwick College January—term course were traveling to Comitán to meet an NGO working with Guatemalan refugees from the genocide in that country, two out of three of our vans cleared a new checkpoint on the outskirts of San Cristóbal, while the third was stopped. After a few moments in my van, I said I'm getting out, it looks like the other professor needs help. I stopped at van two and signaled my intentions. Three female professors stood with our indigenous drivers talking about our itinerary. I learned that a blue-uniformed soldier had informed van three that gringos could not pass. At this point, we listed all of our planned tourist spots, our institutional affiliations, and our doctorates for the soldiers and began learning military—civilian interaction etiquette and protocol. The encounter with military personnel minimally involved showing documents, discussing from where one originated and one's destination, and organizational links; it could involve communication between checkpoints and searches. After much discussion, we were allowed to pass. It was not until we were making arrangements for our return from Comitán with the same drivers that we learned that the military personnel had charged an illegal fee of 100 pesos per van for the right to travel along the major road. This would be the first and last instance of such fees but only the beginning of checkpoint realities.

I tried to capture what would become normal practice at such junctures by writing a litany of questions, places, and identities delivered in the sung tones of a Catholic Mass in a poem entitled *Rumba en la Ruta*—or Dance on the Road.

Rumba en la Ruta

On a road so small that even the maps missed it
 We encountered a cast of hundreds.
 Conjured by a warlord's apprentice
 jungle morphing into men
 M 16 serpents
 humming machines
 Mayan mirrors
 to a underworld of death
 my eyes watching your eyes watching mine

Mud heads meet the Marx Brothers in camo vestments
 the lieutenant intones
¿Dónde vienes? (From where are you coming?)
¿Adónde vas? (Where are you going?)
 Palenque,
 Tonina,
 Agua Azul,
 Amen.

Given the air of intense military scrutiny that surrounded the Acteal massacre, plans to visit the Lacandon jungle were scrapped.

In 1999, the Na Balom Cultural Center arranged room, board, and travel for a Hartwick-SUNY program and prepared us for travel into the jungle to visit the Lacandon village of Naha. We were also bringing supplies and sport equipment to the local school and planning for garden plot and schoolyard clean-up. Traveling with a group meant that we had to have multiple copies of everyone's names and passport numbers so that lists could be left with military men at various checkpoints. We also had to be prepared for being asked to get out of the vehicles to be interrogated by military personnel. We discussed the seriousness of such moments, that no one was to make quick moves, jokes, or gestures or take photos. Interaction, even sustained eye contact with the armed men who staffed the checkpoints and observed the vehicles was out. Bags and luggage could be searched. While it often seemed that the checkpoint posts were not in contact with one another, this was disconfirmed upon our arrival in the remote jungle village of Naha, where several Hummers of fully armed soldiers, equipped with night vision scopes, M-16s and other military weaponry, greeted us as we returned from a brief walk through the village. At the entrance to our jungle camp, an army officer greeted us and offered us any assistance

that we might need during our stay in the jungle. He informed us that he and his men would be stationed nearby and that they were in the area for a government reforestation project. He also asked us if we had any knowledge of or recommendations for the project. In chorus, we said no, nothing. With a wave, he reminded us of his offer. Later, I joked, that this was an interesting neighborhood welcome wagon crew announcing “*mi casa es tu casa*—my house is your house.”

While I have conveyed these situations humorously, they were anything but funny at the time. Humor, storytelling, and poetry became part of the processing of these very solemn moments—survival strategies for the spirit.

In 2000, my travel to three out of five of the villages with Jolom Mayaetik cooperative members was restricted by military checkpoint surveillance. If I traveled there, I risked expulsion. During this time, I met with the president of the co-op and many of the members and representatives in San Cristóbal. Travel to a nearby village was possible and I visited to talk with co-op members to see their spinning and weaving in the community context. From 2000 to 2001, I traveled in the back of a truck with co-op members and entered villages through back roads to meet with members of the cooperative. Since 2001, travel is unrestricted and military checkpoints on major roads have closed; as of 2010, military installations are still omnipresent throughout the highlands.

During the early phase of work in Chiapas, it had initially appeared that the government was primarily concerned with the movement of Mayans, both Guatemalans across the border, and within the state particularly in areas of alleged Zapatista concentration and action. Checkpoints were only the tip of the iceberg, as most military work was going on in the remote mountain (*altos*) and northern jungle regions of the state, removed from casual observation. As outlined by CONPAZ (1997:9–10) in *Militarization and Violence in Chiapas*, in 1997 the Mexican army patrolled and harassed communities day and night, periodically with low level flights, and broke into homes for searches on the pretext of fighting narcotrafficking; interrogations of community members and tourists and roadblocks were routine. The study reported the military’s sexual harassment of indigenous women and the pervasive use of prostitutes and alcohol. CONPAZ also confirmed the military’s training of hired gunmen and the illegal takeover of *ejidal* (communal) land to construct military installations.

Observers noted substantial military presence represented in the multiplying army barracks—30 or more military bases, military equipment like tanks, helicopters, reconnaissance flights, and amphibious vehicles, all supplied by the US Army. The estimated cost of this militarization is \$200 million dollars annually (de Leon 1997:50). The potential for outside observation, even informal, of any of this activity was indeed a very real threat to the Mexican government and was monitored. The US government supplied and continues to provide equipment as part of the War on Drugs campaign.

Flirting with Danger—Immigration Realities

In addition to military personnel in blue, black, and green uniforms, Mexico also utilizes immigration forces to control foreigners. As reported by Global Exchange (1999:2),

During 1998 alone, the government expelled 144 foreigners. Hundreds more observers were pressured by immigration officials to “voluntarily” leave Mexico. Still others have been deterred from entering Mexico by the hostile climate created by a government—promoted media campaign against foreign observers and the creation of some of the most restrictive human rights visa regulations in the hemisphere.

For academics wishing to study and travel there, restrictions on travel to specific locales, time limits, and mysterious application procedures for research visas became commonplace (Hellman 1999:7). The Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas Center for Human Rights Center writes (Global Exchange 1999:25)

One of the strategies of this war has been to convert foreigners into military diplomatic targets, and occasionally into objects for punishment. At least 185 foreigners have been expelled since the beginning of this year under the pretext that they have been carrying out ‘unauthorized activities’ in Chiapas. This practice indicates that the Indians in Chiapas do not have the right to be visited from other countries. It seems that they do not have the right...to share their aspirations or point of view. In other words, the observation and verification of the human rights situation in Mexico is exclusively reserved for the government and its allies. In fact, the apparent intention is to violate the indigenous communities by establishing a cordon around them.

In 1999, on the last day of the Zapatista—sponsored referendum on indigenous rights, my colleague, Jeanne, and I joined hundreds of other civilians and tourists in the square in front of the cathedral in San

Cristóbal to watch the voting, to photograph the event, and to capture the energy of the day in its banners and speeches. Kenny Rogers' song, "Ya Gotta Know When to Hold 'Em" was playing in a number of the cyber cafes in San Cristóbal. I should have attended to the lyrics.

Within hours of following a group of local residents to the municipal auditorium which also housed a jail and watching a rally there, immigration officials detained us, questioned us, delivered a citation, and asked us to report to INM (National Immigration) offices within 24 hours. At INM, I was questioned about my finances, my participation in the Referendum, whether I voted in it, and what did I consider political? In response to my initial queries, the arresting officer said this was "*no problema*"—no problem. The director of INM and the chief interrogator also assured that this was not a serious matter. The interrogation was polite and friendly, even humorous at times. When I saw a man from the rally who had been taking photographs and another who had been videotaping the crowd walk through the interrogation room I said, "Oh, that was the guy who was filming us," the director laughed, "we don't do that in Mexico." At the conclusion of the session, I heard a litany of questions which sounded familiar—questions about my comfort, accommodations, food, and drink. I realized that I was being read my rights as per the Geneva Conventions (The Geneva Conventions refers to the agreements reached by nations regarding the rights of those under interrogation.) This was no laughing matter.

When our friends and colleagues saw our names mentioned on the national evening T.V. news, they thought that perhaps it was our email correspondence and their computers that had caused this situation. One NGO had had its computer stolen earlier in the week and connected these two events. As it turned out, our friends and colleagues had nothing to do with our interrogation and eventual expulsion from Mexico, rather, any foreigner who had witnessed the rally and march was expelled, regardless of her knowledge, commitments, or background. In the official press, our expulsions were again used to make the point that foreigners were meddling in internal politics.

As a tourist, I represented an anomaly to the pattern of expulsion of human rights observers that had been expelled from Mexico. My colleague and I had to challenge the ruling, and with the help of the Center for Human Rights, obtain permission to stay in the country as long as we had planned. We also had to get permission to leave the country and return for future visits with friends and colleagues, as well as work to reverse the verdict of a two year expulsion from Mexico.

In 2000, the case against us was overturned on the grounds that the government's actions had violated our constitutional rights.

This turn of events was utterly Orwellian. In no way was I prepared to deal with this situation. I had been focused on the impact of militarization on indigenous people. While I was cognizant of state surveillance and in earlier years had cautioned my students to be careful about what they said to whom, I did not imagine being stopped and expelled from the tourist city of San Cristóbal. This was my spring break from the college and the end of the Zapatista referendum. I was focused on meeting my new colleagues at Jolom and I cried out loud in the immigration office at news that I could not return to Chiapas for two years. Sitting for hours in the office of immigration or the Center for Human Rights shocked me into seeing this layer of government intimidation, a layer that our friends and colleagues experienced on a daily basis. Such situations also generate great, legitimate fear and suspicion and the need for secure contacts, and extreme clarity of commitment on the nature of the relationship one wishes to establish with contacts there.

In response to the militarization of Chiapas and the expulsion of thousands of foreign observers from Chiapas, Global Exchange produced the report, *Foreigners of Conscience* (1999:26) and argued that

In practical terms, the frustration of international observation facilitates the government's low intensity war against indigenous communities such as EZLN support bases, the *Abejas* (the victims of the Acteal massacre) and other nonconformist indigenous groups that support the San Andrés Accords and have established autonomous municipalities.

The result of this activity was a sealing off of highland and jungle communities from outsiders.

The no-go areas created by the Mexican Army and INM (immigration authority) are areas of strategic importance to the government...also areas of greatest paramilitary activity...and not in the political or economic interests of the Zedillo Administration that evidence of this dirty war reaches the international community (Global Exchange 1999:26).

Implications of Work in the Zona de Conflicto

With respect to research in Mexico, Hellman (1999:9) contends that:

For...researchers, the new requirements constitute a source of growing dismay, especially for those who work in southern Mexico or anywhere

among the poor and the powerless. By and large the notion that one can state in advance on a visa application all the places, people, and things that will become part of the field experience is absurd. Invariably, researchers discover opportunities in the course of a field trip that they can not anticipate when they apply for a visa. Foreigners who engage in activities not specified in their visa are subject to 'deportation' under the *Ley General de Población*, a statute that regulates immigration.

While research or collaborative work with NGOs is at stake, the more critical point is the stifling of criticism of Mexico's human rights record. Paramilitary murders, rapes, and intimidation have been carried out routinely with impunity (Amnesty International 2001; Physicians for Human Rights 1994; Castillo 1998). Our work in conflict zones like Chiapas foregrounds our shared human condition—the struggle for lives of dignity, planting the seeds of hope, and the radical promise of true democracy and social justice. Understanding that challenge entailed learning about civil society in resistance, grassroots mobilization, and women's organizing. K'inál Antzetik, an organization whose names means learning to walk in women's land, guided me on this journey.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEARNING TO WALK IN WOMEN'S LAND: THE PROCESS OF ACCOMPANIMENT WITH K'INAL ANTZETIK

Our main objective is to contribute to the transformation of relations of discrimination between genders, and along with this work toward the construction of social justice, democracy, and autonomy. Our means of work is through analysis, reflection, education and formation in diverse areas of organized action of Indigenous women of Chiapas (K'in al Antzetik document).

Accompaniment/Acompañamiento

I first came across the work of K'in al Antzetik in 1998 through a newsletter from *Madre* (Mother) where I learned that *Madre*—a US based international women's human rights organization that works in conflict zones—was working with K'in al on women's reproductive health. When I visited San Cristóbal that year, I attended a party at a US anthropologist's house and when talking with another woman about our parallel interests, I asked her if she knew of the organization. She told me it was one block from where we were. The next day, I walked over to the office. The large wooden door at the street was locked so I rang a buzzer. The door opened and I was greeted but my halting response in Spanish was met with the reply that she would get someone who spoke English. When waiting for a representative, I noticed a huge mural painted on the wall.

The mural (see figure 1) that graced the former office of K'in al Antzetik and the former home of its sister organization, Jolom Mayaetik, the weaving cooperative, has as its central motif, various elements which powerfully and symbolically capture the work, organizational philosophy, and process of K'in al. A Mayan woman's face is at the center of the painting surrounded by strong vertical lines like the weavings from San Andrés, home to most of the cooperative's members. Embedded in the bold design were smaller diamonds of pictures depicting scenes from life in the highlands. One displayed a sheep, sacred to the highland Mayans as the source of the wool that the women weave. Another showed mountains like those surrounding



Figure 7 K'inal Antzetik Former Office Mural. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.



Figure 8 K'inal Antzetik sign at International Women's Day march, San Cristóbal, 2005. Courtesy of Jolom Mayaetik archives.

San Cristóbal. A third portrayed a woman with fields in the background and a small building marked as a school. Another showed a woman holding a heart with music notes emerging from it. A fifth, showed an ear of corn, the sacred seed and food. Taken together, they were a powerful statement of the vision of K'inal and all those who worked with it.

When the woman arrived, I told her of my work with women's health issues in the US, and work with Guatemalan refugee organizations in Chiapas from 1997–98. I also spoke of my interest in having my future students meet the members of K'inal and their sister organization, Jolom Mayaetik, when we came in January, 1999. We agreed to share information and to stay in touch by email. At this very first meeting, I had the feeling in my gut that I had come to just the place I needed and that we had shared visions.

That meeting marked the beginning of what has now become a deep and long relationship. Subsequent meetings revolved around my students and our coursework, and over time, and with talks, tasks, emails, we forged trust. During our meetings, I often heard the term

accompany used to refer to the women “escorting” me or others in the process of understanding a process or a task. I learned first-hand that accompaniment was our solidarity with one another in our struggle north and south.

Women’s Land

K’inal Antzetik, is an NGO whose name means “Women’s Land” in the Mayan language of Tzeltal. The name speaks to the composition as well as the vision of this grassroots non-governmental organization that works with and for indigenous women across Chiapas, and intensively with Jolom Mayaetik, a Mayan women’s weaving cooperative in the highland region of the Mexican state of Chiapas.

K’inal Antzetik formed in 1995 at the same time that members in an existing government-run weaving co-op of 850 members, J’Pas Joloviletik, split over the organization’s growing political presence and voice. Members of the original group chose to focus solely on economic matters and remain affiliated with the government. Those who left formed Jolom Mayaetik, an independent, indigenous, and women-governed cooperative committed to both economic work and political organizing.

As stated by K’inal, its central focus is indigenous women’s lives. Its work is focused on economic development and empowerment projects particularly but not solely for or by women. In addition, K’inal is involved in mental health work, literacy, education, training and evaluation, and an indigenous history project. Across contexts, women developing their political voices is of paramount importance and is reflected in the members’ participation in an array of political activities from international conferences, national conferences, participation in civil society and women’s networks (*redes*), referenda, assemblies, public demonstrations, policy construction, and public events like the International Women’s Day March held on March 8th.

Yolanda Castro Apreza (Eber and Kovic 2003), K’inal’s president, describes the organizing context of 1993 as difficult and dangerous. Yolanda, who was working as an INI advisor with J’Pas Joloviletik at the time, and other cooperative staff and members received death threats and the cooperative’s store was damaged.

In terms of organizing philosophy, Yolanda recalls

From the beginning of our work, we talked about the rights that indigenous women have and the importance of making women's organizations our own space where decisions are made by the women themselves. To achieve this goal, it was necessary to replace indigenous men who controlled some weavers' groups with indigenous women. The women initiated this process by claiming the power that they had begun to take in the different groups and at the assemblies (Y. Castro Apreza in Eber and Kovic 2003:210).

Mica, one of the co-founders of K'inal and its current director (*coordinadora*) recounts

We separated from the INI, those of us who weren't in the cooperative but we supported it, we founded the K'inal Antzetik Association. We founded this organization because it was hard to get financing for a cooperative, and also we saw it was necessary to support other areas of life that didn't have to do with the crafts, for example the areas of health or education. We also wanted the cooperative to have its own structure and to make its own decisions without us getting involved in everything. The objective of K'inal Antzetik was more to go along with the process and strengthen us so that we could become more autonomous (See full text appendix 3).

Mica writes that K'inal Antzetik was founded to assist with finding funding for the cooperative and to aid in other areas of the members' lives like health and education. K'inal's objective was to assist and strengthen Jolom Mayaetik in its process of development toward autonomy.

Yolanda, co-founder of K'inal Antzetik, states that objectives include

strengthening indigenous women's organizations, basically production organizations of women already in existence. That commitment forms a part of our ethics. Now, years after the formation of K'inal Antzetik, our thinking remains the same: to facilitate a transition from reliance on outside assistance to self management by the members themselves. The formation of K'inal was a joint venture with J'Pas Joloviletik. It was not a unilateral decision (Y. Castro Apreza in Eber and Kovic 2003:211).

These foci continue to be at the heart of civil society organizing across the state of Chiapas and Jolom and K'inal are significant makers of that history (Y. Castro Apreza 2003). From Yolanda's perspective, NGOs like K'inal are spaces for reflection, analysis, transformation, and resistance and for probing human relations profoundly (Interview, June, 1999).

During my first interview with Yolanda in 1999, we spoke of the organizational philosophy and practice involved in the work of assisting in developing women's weaving cooperatives in the mountain region. We also discussed violence, both domestic and military, and their impact in the highland region and on the life of the organization's members and the organizations themselves. I began by asking Yolanda about another interview of hers that I had read and her discussion of the need to use special language in the context of organizing within the organization and I wondered if it she was referring to a feminist one.

Kate: In a previous interview, you referred to a using a unique language. Do you use a unique language in your organization? A feminist one specifically?

Yolanda: Feminista-no, not exactly feminist. There are various elements. It's important to have a language which captures the indigenous peoples' work, their lives. Women's bodies talk; and we must understand the way they communicate. There is a language beyond language—a language of the body. It is very important because for so many years they have lived in silence with no contact with Mexican society. For many years they are in the highlands (*altos*), isolated by their monolingualism—70% of the women in the *altos* do not speak Spanish. The language must be inclusive of their concepts, their words which are at the foundation of the people. In 1994, the Revolutionary Law of Women of the Zapatistas—the whole world and the women were talking about the laws, the laws, and both *mestizos* and indigenous. These laws, they like them.

This same line of thought is echoed in the comment of Lorenza, Jolom's first President and early K'inal member.

Starting with January 1994, the women talked about politics, they knew of the existence of the Zapatista movement, and they had to decide with their hearts if they agreed or not. And how they would be able to talk about how they had lived during all of the centuries of oppression. For me this is key because to see them with their sons and daughters who had heard other words, other thoughts. These changes, are going to be in those children, the young ones, because they have been to the meetings, learning to distinguish between the customs which are good and bad (Rovira 1997).

Yolanda underscores this position again in an eloquent informational bulletin distributed in honor of International Women's Day, March 8,

1999 entitled *Between Dreams and Moons—the Weavers on the Referendum on Indigenous Rights*. In this passage, she also makes explicit that organizing is across sectors.

These (the *tejedoras*-weavers/women activists) are the ones of the cities and pueblos of Mexico, who speak of hope, who give a voice to our thoughts, who wear the colors of their traditional dress, the force of their bodies, the conscience, the anguish, the desires, the dreams, the voices, and finally, the silence of many years of oppression, exploitation, subordination, racism, and many other things. With them is the force and the work not only of the Zapatista movement but of the various *maestros*(teachers) and indigenous who in distinct moments have made their contributions, in order to make this force, a force of all the women of Mexico (Y. Castro Apreza, March 8, 1999).

In 2002, I was interviewing members of K'inál and asking them to recount their history to me. As part of that story, Paty, a *mestiza* office manager for K'inál Antzetik, told me of the accompaniment work that she did with the indigenous women from Jolom. She said that often, when the women came down from the mountains, they had great fear doing many of the things that they would have to do as members of the cooperative. It was Paty's job to accompany them in the process of learning how to talk on a telephone, how to speak in public, or how to deposit money in the bank. Both K'inál and Jolom were preparing the women to interact in mestizo society, something which they had limited exposure to as long as they remained in mountain villages composed of totally Mayan members. As young women moved to San Cristóbal to work at the cooperative's center, or when they traveled for Jolom Mayaetik events to participate in conferences and meetings, indigenous women would encounter and have to interact with mestizos. Both Paty and Imelda, an indigenous business advisor and Sociology student, accompanied the women and provided "capacitation" in marketing, which included speaking Spanish, reading, math, accounting, and interacting in local, regional, and international marketing contexts which involves getting passports and other necessary documents. As Paty said, "It's difficult for the women to even go to Mexico City when they have never gone anywhere with strangers. It's very difficult as many of the women have only completed elementary school and they did not even learn to count; so they become very nervous. She has to learn new things—How do I make a deposit?"

In 2002, when speaking with Merit, another original member of K'inál, she shared with me her sense of accompaniment within K'inál and her work in collaboration with Yolanda. As an indigenous woman, Merit told me of an initially slow and difficult process of change for the indigenous women as they transitioned from a government, INI (National Indigenous Institute)—controlled cooperative to a women—governed one. In 1994, “a big door opened and ideas of autonomy, words, and independent decisions arose.” But these new ideas brought conflict—conflict with the government and with families and customs (See Nash 1970 for a discussion of the negative consequences of cooperative organizing, witchcraft allegations, and death). She said, for example, that while husbands had not been involved with artisan production, women checked with them for business decisions and reported back on what their husbands were saying. “This was not easily changed.” But through meetings and reunions, “we talked, analyzed, and shared information with the members.” Skill workshops were an effective way to get the women together and share ideas. A bottom line realization was that, “political processes didn’t guarantee food; but one was a platform for the other. When we would go to communities and talk about learning to write, the people would say, ‘Why? I can do all of my work in the market without it.’” She continued that only a few would know how to add numbers and most did not care. But, if the representatives from K'inál would say, “we are going to sell items in the market,” whoosh, crowds would appear and be interested.

She added that in creating strong economic projects to empower the artisans, other awareness emerged like informal education, recognition through external validation that their work was art, and a new sense of worth. She said that this was a very different reaction in them.

Merit said that now that the weaving cooperative is established, it functions as a mentoring school for younger women. Work within K'inál “obliges one to study, read, and develop another vision, as the organization has its own sensitivity and clarity. Working in the communities is the first organizational priority, and anyone working with K'inál must be sensitive to this philosophy and objective, and possess the energy to be part of a force, to move ahead into various spaces, and to see a mission and possible dreams as a part of one’s life with no end point, only continuing” (Interview 2002).

I shared with her the notion I had that I saw the accompaniment that K'inál was doing for Jolom, and older members of Jolom for younger ones, but that I also saw another type. The members of K'inál and Jolom were accompanying those of us from the global north in our understanding of Mexican and indigenous life, particularly the place of struggle and change, the nature of collectives, building solidarity, and the role of hope in struggle. Later, as our solidarity network in the north grew to include US speaking tours on Women Confronting Globalization, conference workshops, and partnership programs, I realized that we were also accompanying the cooperative members as they encountered our airports, hotels, and communities and specifically, immigration authorities, our English language system, cuisine (bad corn tortillas), washers and dryers, banking system, and dollar stores.

Human Rights and Guerra de Baja Intensidad (GBI)
"Low Intensity Warfare"

Since 1994, the Mexican government has responded to the Zapatista uprising with actions designed to "minimize body counts while maximizing divisive tactics within the population" (Nash 1998). Presently, over 70,000 troops occupy Chiapas. "40% of the Mexican army is stationed in a place that has no problem" (Ruiz 1999). The soldiers now are practicing "social work." This new official focus as outlined in the *Plan de Campaña* (Campaign Plan) has as its key objective "*romper las relaciones de apoyo que existen entre la población y los transgresores de la ley.*"—to break the relations which exist between the population and rebels. With respect to the paramilitary—"En caso de no existir fuerzas de autodefensa, es necesario crearlas..." in cases where no (paramilitary) local defense forces exist, create them (Marin 1998).

The Center for Human Rights Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas calls the strategy a "*guerra de desgaste*"—a plan to wear out the local population slowly, to "*reducir poco a poco sus recursos materiales, su entereza psicológica y sus valores espirituales*"—to reduce little by little, their material means, psychological integrity, and spiritual means (Marin 1998). K'inál, the NGO with whom I work, has referred to the same as a war of extermination.

For women, so called “low intensity warfare” (GBI) manifests itself in harassment, beating, rape, and the utilization of prostitutes as informants. Women and children represent life, the future, the promise of democracy, and hope. They are seen minimally as symbols, maximally, as targets. In Chenalhó, the assassins who murdered 45 men, women, children, and fetuses perceived their work as literally destroying the seed (Eber 1998).

The women of K’inal have confronted this intimidation and violence personally in their organizing efforts. In addition, people in the villages where they are working are experiencing constant intimidation, paramilitary invasions, beatings, rape, arrests, and imprisonment. In an interview, I asked Yolanda, advisor to K’inal, to address the question of Low Intensity Warfare.

Kate: How is K’inal responding to GBI?

Yolanda: We organize civil rights brigades against the military, testimonials, and programs for mental health.

In subsequent meetings and actions, it became clear that Low Intensity Warfare was analyzed not only as paramilitary events but rather as the constant daily threat to life which results from militarization linked to globalization.

In a March 1, 1999 bulletin discussing the meeting of Zapatista referendum workers, Yolanda writes:

In an effervescent climate of violence, hostility and intimidation on the part of paramilitary groups, is a reality; but the force, organization, and struggle on the part of the communities and pueblos in resistance is the main principle making this *consulta* a grand mobilization.... We talk of the necessity of organizing against the constant human rights violations of women... the constant sexual violations which occur in this climate of insecurity and militarization (Y. Castro Apreza 1/99).

“No Hay Democracia” There is No Democracy

In December, 2000, Yolanda, the President of K’inal, wrote a powerful Manifesto to the Pueblo. She sent it out worldwide in conjunction with the announcement of the “Mobilization Against the War of Extermination and in Favor of the 70 million Poor who Live in Mexico.” In it she said,

There is no democracy with political prisoners.

There is no democracy with the army in indigenous communities of Chiapas, Oaxaca, Guerrero and other parts of the country.

There is no democracy while paramilitary groups in the service of the counterinsurgency and local political power groups exist.

There is no democracy while there is no compliance with the San Andrés Accords or recognition of the place that indigenous people occupy in the Mexican nation.

There is no democracy with 70 million Mexicans in poverty (author's translation).

In making these claims, she challenged Mexican President Fox's neo-liberal development plans of the north and its global financial organizations, the IMF and the World Bank, and held them accountable (Keck and Sikkink 1998:16). While the North applauded the ascendancy of a new party in Mexico and thought that Fox would follow through with the de-militarization of Chiapas, critics on the ground in Chiapas argued that the troops would stay to ensure the strategy of economic development through the extraction of minerals, petroleum, and labor power-and they have. Fox's 2000 election also



Figure 9 Members of women's knitted clothing collective working with K'in al Antzetik, Tumbalá, Chiapas, Mexico 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

moved politics from center-right (PRI) to right-winged PAN (*Partido Acción Nacional*).

Indigenous and *mestiza* women's resistance to oppression and squalor is concrete. Their challenge parallels the struggle that confronts workers and communities North and South alike. Similarly, their resolute and courageous actions in the face of tremendous economic, military, and political adversity stand as models for people worldwide. Major structural conditions which shape the organizing challenges of K'inál include the existence of militarization, pervasive and worsening poverty, and US-backed neo-liberal economic interventions—now all conceptualized and experienced as dimensions of persistent Low Intensity Warfare.

Muy Gringo (very US) Economics and Economic Justice

Economic organizing is a central focus of K'inál Antzetik. This work is based on the view that most of the projects being proposed for Chiapas, like tourist parks, and other "liberal" economic policies, are what Yolanda referred to as "*muy gringo*." These projects are backed by banks, the state, and transnational investment and involve an individualist, capitalist ideology which contradicts and undermines the communitarian ethic of indigenous community life. The individualist enterprise can also set up false expectations and divisions among the women. Yolanda and other critical analysts discuss how privatization, a central feature of neoliberalism, will change the everyday life of the indigenous people who "dream of going to the US for big money" but who the US exploits as a source of cheap labor both in Mexico and the US. Because the US controls the human rights discussion and wants development very quickly, this development is occurring despite the human cost. The US also directly controls development via banks and the PRI. She argues that capitalism is not a solution but that people "die from trying" (Y. Castro Apreza Interview, June, 1999).

In a public, organizational bulletin, Inés Castro Apreza questions the "contention of a growing Mexican economy, a forceful GNP, exports, and a country on the rise" and poses the questions, "What is Mexico? Who is Mexico? Of what growing economy are we talking?" In response, she replies, Mexico is its people, and only a few are actually benefiting from this supposed growth and what separates the haves from the have nots is power. She goes on to link the voices of 500 years of resistance, rebellion, and protest to the voices which

today condemn neoliberal economic policies (Inés Castro Apreza, March 30, 1999).

In contrast to neoliberal economic policy, K'inal sees women's cooperatives and their sale of artisan products as critical to the economic survival of women and their families. K'inal is involved with the large, Mayan, women's weaving cooperative, Jolom Mayaetik, in every phase of economic strengthening including teaching women mathematics, reading, pricing, marketing, new technologies like peddle loom weaving, and development of new designs which meet customer tastes. This work is not done with state or World Bank financing but through grants, solidarity networks, and international women's organizations. Presently, K'inal is advising across highlands and jungle sectors but not does consolidate all communities' work. Their organizational philosophy includes various dimensions of the personal, familial, and community life of indigenous women and, therefore, will take different forms depending on particular contexts (K'inal Organizational Document). Organizing in the *altos* (highlands) presently is focused on economic empowerment; organizing in the *selva* (jungle) is taking the form of political rights at this historical stage (Interview, June, 1999).

*Brigades and Civil Society Organizing—La Lucha Sigue
(The Struggle Continues)*

In 1999, The Zapatista Referendum on Indigenous Rights was held and all of the members of civil society were called on to help with logistics. Delegates from K'inal and Jolom made up one brigade of 10–15 which later gave birth to the *Coordinadora*, a civil society organization which worked across the state to educate and link civil society in their shared struggles. Examples of political struggles cutting across the state include the impact of low intensity warfare, privatization of electricity, and development plans. As with K'inal, the *Coordinadora* communicated locally, regionally, and internationally via the internet and the solidarity network is called to action by name: "To the national and international press, to indigenous and *campesina* organizations, to NGOs, to student organizations, to civil society national and international, to all in Mexico."

At the rally which followed the 2000 International Women's Day march in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Mexico, Rosalinda Santiz Diaz, a Mayan woman from San Andrés, President of Jolom Mayaetik, and

member of K'inál, ended her speech, "The women united will never be defeated" (See full text in appendix 4). As Rosalinda was speaking, women from all over the world were there in San Cristóbal to help celebrate this day. Rosalinda made reference to them and their networks (Keck and Sikkink 1999) in her speech when she greeted international women participating in the same march around the globe. This transnational consciousness is the product of years of intensive networking and communicating.

One major way that K'inál and other human rights organizations in Chiapas have established this network is through use of internet messages to get the word out about conditions in Mexico. Through informational bulletins (*informes*-reports) and denunciations of government actions (*denuncios* and *testimonios*-testimonials) that were sent worldwide, K'inál informed the network and rallied support for holding powerful actors accountable. These messages had recurrent themes—struggle, autonomy, human rights, sovereignty, and justice—and powerfully challenged the morality of the Mexican and US governments and leaders, military authorities, international financial institutions like the World Bank, IMF, and the WTO, and international corporate authorities.

Mica invoked these same themes in a speech she gave at our session at the Society for Applied Anthropology Conference in Merida in 2000. She powerfully addressed her personal struggles with family, hard agricultural work, and poverty and her growth through indigenous women's organizing (see Appendix 3 for full text).

All these years, since I began working in the store, I have learned a lot and I have gained strength. Not only did I learn to speak, to have technical knowledge, I also learned how we indigenous women can get ahead, that we have the strength and the courage to ask for justice, that poverty and racism aren't our fault and that there is a whole system that oppresses us. Mexico is a country rich in natural resources, but the money is badly distributed. What they want is power to better exploit the resources that we have as indigenous women.

In the next chapter, I discuss the Mayan women's organization, Jolom Mayaetik, its practice of participatory democracy, and its challenges of nurturing young, indigenous women's leadership and providing steady income to its members. I also examine the complexity of asserting Mayan women's voices within traditional indigenous and ladino cultures.

CHAPTER FIVE

JOLOM MAYAETIK—MAYAN WOMEN'S WEAVING CO-OPERATIVE AND COLLECTIVISM

Women and cooperatives are the first line of defense against taking the land and loss of the land for the *campesinos* and life for them. It is a distinct location. (Researcher, CIEPAC—Center for Economic and Political Studies on Community Action, MX 2002)

Today, I am happy to be in this land though I am far away from my own country because I see and feel the other women fighting and suffering the consequences of wars which hurt us so very much. It is necessary to join our voices and to recover the strength of our hearts. Receive a warm greeting from all the indigenous women who are fighting in Mexico for a life with justice and dignity. Most of us are weavers and today, we give you the colors of our work to join your dances, songs, and fights to reclaim a better life. (Rosalinda Santiz Diaz World Court of Women against War, Cape Town, South Africa 2001 see Appendix 1)

Introduction: Jolom Mayaetik—Women Who Weave with One Heart

One distinct location of Mayan women's struggle for rights and economic and political democracy, or the "revolution within the revolution" is within autonomous women's cooperatives led by indigenous women. In Jolom Mayaetik, indigenous women and their allies are creating solidarity economics and political mobilizations for gender equity, and developing young, new leaders to represent their collective organizing efforts in local and global arenas. This cooperative space allows elected representatives to assert their leadership in the context of the women's collective vision. As will be discussed later, Jolom's autonomous identity, collective structure, and participatory democracy produce tension and conflict, internal and external, but also synthesize an indigenous, collective vision of rights, women's rights, and individual hopes. (For a discussion of the tension which exists between a northern, western individualist, human rights discourse and that enunciated in the Global South see Keck and Sikkink 1999). Such a political stance was born out of the women's adverse experiences with

exclusion from traditional male leadership in their communities, *ladino* (*mestizo* elite) power within Mexican society, and former government-run cooperatives headed by men and controlled by bureaucrats. For these reasons, the women of Jolom, half who are married with children, made the decision to have an independent cooperative run by women. The decision to be politically independent has also resulted in some serious negative ramifications for Jolom both in Chiapas and in the global north.

The themes of indigenous and women's autonomy and dignity are linked by the cooperative's leaders and members and enunciated by the cooperative's leadership in speeches and at demonstrations and by the members across informal contexts. In San Cristóbal de las Casas, women from the indigenous communities of the mountains are building autonomous, indigenous associations and transnational networks with *mestizas* and Global Northern activists to challenge state—supported, neoliberal policies and to create social justice for indigenous women and their families.



Figure 10 Members of Jolom Mayaetik co-operative in Bautista Chico preparing wool for spinning. Chiapas, Mexico 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

This chapter examines the work of the grassroots Mayan women's weaving cooperative, Jolom Mayaetik, and its creation of alternative economic and political realities. In so doing, the women are challenging traditional, patriarchal practices within indigenous and Mexican society, both of which have restricted indigenous women's voice and autonomy. I begin with a brief overview of women's artisan cooperatives in Chiapas and then move to consideration of Jolom's unique history and structure including the practice of participatory democracy, consensus decision-making, and civil society political actions. I also discuss the complex issues of economic viability, the global, capitalist economy's impact on Mayan women and their response to that, the development of new designs in conjunction with a French project, *El Camino* (the road), and the creation of the new center for women's leadership and education in San Cristóbal which houses both Jolom Mayaetik and K'inál Antzetik offices.



Figure 11 Backstrap loom weaver, Bautista Chico, 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

Information about Our Cooperative and Our Products

In January of 1996, 250 craftswomen from the mountains of Chiapas created a new life for ourselves. We founded the Jolom Mayaetik Cooperative, which in Tzotzil, a highland Mayan language of the region, means "Mayan Women Weavers."

The organization is composed of women from the municipalities of San Andres, Chamula, Huixtan and Oxchuc. This diversity allows us to produce all of the traditional designs of the region. Though the majority of us weave with the backstrap loom, some of us embroider as well. For weaving and embroidery, all of us use cotton and self-produced wool.

The Jolom Mayaetik Cooperative is made up of 10 groups of craftswomen from 9 different communities. Two representatives from each group form the "General Assembly of Representatives," which meets to discuss and make decisions based on each community's needs. All of our members select the President and the Secretary of our organization, and it is their job to assist in administering our store in San Cristóbal de Las Casas, México.

In 1999, we began creating the Center for Production and Training of Indigenous Women. In this Center, women are able to take courses in administration, bookkeeping, and the use and handling of the pedal loom and sewing machine. We learn to adapt ourselves to the demands of the market without forgetting the traditional designs we weave and embroider. Production, Commercialization, Training, and Administration; all of this we take into our own hands to better the quality of our lives.

The growth of the Jolom Mayaetik Cooperative and the Training Center has shown us that the creation and use of collective spaces for women allow us to develop relationships of a more equal nature, both within our communities and the larger public. Our work thus contributes to the development of a more just society.

Figure 12 *Information about Our Cooperative and Our Products*. Early Jolom Mayaetik Pamphlet.

Jolom Mayaetik and Learning to Work with a Cooperative

Since 1998, I have been doing activist, solidarity work with two organizations in Chiapas, Mexico—K'inál Antzetik (chapter 4), and extensively with Jolom Mayaetik. Jolom Mayaetik, which in Tzotzil means Women Who Weave, is a Mayan women's weaving cooperative composed of approximately 186 women in the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico.

Jolom has its roots in J'Pas Joloviletik, a weaving cooperative of 850 women, one of the largest and most important cooperatives in the highland region. It was founded in 1984 and state-run by INI. While women were the weavers, the government's intent was to elevate a few people to become new bosses—not to create a democratic organization. During 1990–91, INI expelled leftist or progressive INI organizers with sociology or anthropology backgrounds as they were perceived as dangerous. The organization also suffered from internal conflicts due to lack of transparency, debts, and a car accident which

resulted in deaths (Y. Castro Apreza in Eber and Kovic 2003). The role of advisors like Yolanda changed and the indigenous women, particularly women from San Andrés Larrainzar, began to question the male leadership and assert their own control of the cooperative. With the 1994 Zapatista uprising, threats intensified, and the cooperative split with INI in 1994.

Jolom Mayaetik was formed in 1996 after separating from J'Pas Joloviletik in the wake of a decade of sharply declining wages, rising cost of living, continuing economic and political exploitation of the indigenous people, and military occupation and in order to focus on both economic and political autonomy for indigenous women. Jolom's philosophy is summarized in the early pamphlet shown above. While initially Jolom had members in 9 communities, they now have 10 groups of weavers in 5 municipalities (counties) of the highland region of Chiapas with a training, production, and education center and storeroom in San Cristóbal de Las Casas. The population of these municipalities is largely indigenous Tzotzil and Tzeltal-speaking Maya and totals 207,925. Jolom's largest membership is from the municipality of San Andrés Larrainzar where Jolom has groups in the municipal seat, Tzutzben, Oventic Chico, Oventic Grande, Bayalemo, and Unenaltik. In Chenalhó, Jolom has a group in Jolxic. In Pantelhó, there are members in Barrio Santa Cruz and Barrio Los Naranjos. In the municipality of Chamula, there is one group in Bautista Chico. Two groups have formed in the municipality of Oxchuc-Yochib and the municipal seat. One group of weavers organized in the municipality of Zinacantán, just left the cooperative. As mentioned earlier, the center is in San Cristóbal. Overall, 12,907 people live in the specific communities with Jolom chapters.

Jolom's Projects

North-South economic solidarity work initiatives are jointly produced by the cooperative with people in the US; we take our cues from the community and our bottom lines address structural issues—poverty, political voice, and equity issues. Our work has centered in several key areas including fair trade textile sales, health including reproductive justice, and education.

Jolom provides training, transportation, food, and support for members to learn skills and new designs through workshops at their center. In addition to individual members weaving textiles in their

homes, Jolom has also pursued teaching peddle loom weaving to young members at their center.

Jolom Mayaetik hosts and teaches Hartwick students as well as other international delegations. Jolom board members accompany visitors to meet co-op members in the mountains and provide translation from Tzotzil and Tzeltal into Spanish. The process of Jolom board members interacting with their constituents and cooperative members sharing their lives and work with visitors in intimate ways is very powerful and compelling.

The cooperative works with K'inol to train new board members in travelling abroad and to interact with the solidarity network via email and occasional phone calls. Learning to negotiate countries where most of the communication is in English is difficult for the women and traveling in the US can be hard and lonely. Learning the visa and document acquisition process is another major initiative.

Jolom Mayaetik's Structure

In 1996, Jolom was born from the split within a former cooperative. Jolom represents a model of organizing which stresses the development of political and economic rights—one where decisions are made collectively, vote is by consensus, and indigenous women lead the organization which is composed of indigenous women. Three representatives are elected from each participating community and the president can serve a maximum of two, two year terms.

The board of directors is composed of a president, treasurer, and secretary and is voted upon by the assembly composed of community representatives. The board is in charge of maintaining communication with member communities, resolving conflicts, organizing training workshops and assemblies and providing food for members and children during them, managing the office and pedal loom production facility, purchasing thread in bulk to keep costs down for member weavers, acquiring textiles from members, paying members for their weavings, ticketing items, shipping, marketing, and selling textiles, managing accounting and inventory, communicating with clients and solidarity volunteers, attending regional indigenous women's meetings, traveling abroad and giving talks, making presentations to foundations and international NGOs, and mentoring the board members during a six month training period.



Figure 13 Jolom Mayaetik community representatives gathering for January, 2009 assembly in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

Jolom has addressed the need for member input by creating its village representative structure, elected officers, term limits, and by having its board members travel weekly to mountain communities to discuss issues with members. Dispute resolution teams have also been created.

Center for Training and Education

In order to support indigenous women's leadership and develop greater economic viability, Jolom and K'inál decided to pursue the development of a new center in San Cristóbal. The center was funded through international grants principally from Basque region solidarity groups. The purpose of the center is to build support for indigenous women as they open new spaces of participation in their communities and in Mexican society. It is conceived in three phases of construction with the first two having been built in 2004. The center houses administrative areas for assemblies, computer education, and offices as well as bathrooms, showers, a health consulting room, classrooms, and a storage room for Jolom's textiles and thread. The second building houses dining and kitchen facilities and a small dormitory. A third small building for the pedal loom equipment was built in 2005 and an organic garden and animal pens were added. A composting toilet was built by international solidarity groups in 2008. Each area of the center is designed to generate income in the long run. In addition to skills workshops and training, the women also participate in workshops on



Figure 14 Celerina, Celia and Pascuala—Members of Jolom Mayaetik at the new Center 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

key contemporary issues like civil society organizing. They also host national and international workshops and conferences.

The residential programs are designed to create a safe and secure living space with support for young, indigenous women in transiting into *mestizo* contexts as they migrate from their villages to San Cristóbal. This includes cooperative members from the *altos* as well as the young daughters of civil society resistance members from the eastern part of Chiapas whose parents have experienced government repression and even imprisonment. Leadership development for young women is the goal and the women living at the center collectively work out the rules for the center and talk with the coordinator about emergent political and personal issues.

The cooperative's former president, Rosalinda, the first member of Jolom to complete college, has used her degree in community health and advanced training in alternative health to develop a program using native, medicinal herbs. Together with Claudia, a young, indigenous woman who has completed her training as a nurse and mid-



Figure 15 Shawls produced as part of El Camino Project, Yochib, Chiapas, Mexico 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

wife, the center offers health consultations, herbs, referrals, and community health workshops.

Jolom's International Sales Networks—New Design Project
"El Camino"

In 1996, a French textile designer and weaver named Veronique Tesseraud met members of Jolom Mayaetik and saw their beautiful weavings. Her desire to work with Jolom, to help them preserve their art, and to make a decent living resulted in the creation of a French association which worked on new designs with the Jolom weavers.

El Camino is composed of seven French women friends who are textile professionals—designers and graphic artists. They meet to share their ideas and to develop annual textile lines and annual sales expositions in and around Paris where most of the women live. These women consulted with members of the cooperative on designs which utilize Mayan symbols and which take into consideration European tastes. New designs were worked out with groups of weavers in each

community; they capitalize on the skills and designs that certain villages master-embroidery from Chamula and stripes from Yochib. “Joint reflection” sessions with scissors, glue, and colored paper, either at the co-op or in the villages, were translated from Tzotzil to Spanish, and the women debate patterns, colors, and technique.

El Camino’s financial support for pedal looms and training opened up this weaving to women as it is usually done by males in Chiapas and complements the traditional backstrap loom weaving. The pedal loom is used to make dish towels. The backstrap loom continues to be used to make most of the textiles like table cloths—the first models made included three named *la estrella*, *el serpiente* and the *mariposa*—the star, the snake, and the butterfly—three traditional patterns which decorate the clothing of the women of the town of San Andrés Larrainzar. Like all new models, these were completed during workshops organized by *El Camino* with the weavers. After new items were developed, one or two large expositions were held



Figure 16 *El Camino* design workshop with members of Jolom Mayaetik, Center for Women’s Training and Education, San Cristóbal, 2007. Photographer: Katherine O’Donnell.

each year in Paris, France where interior decorators and other designers from around France viewed the textiles and purchased them.

In January 2009, the *El Camino*—Jolom Mayaetik collaboration ended. Veronique's group had decided that it would not work with K'in al any longer. They also requested that Jolom pay 7% of total US sales to *El Camino* and that *El Camino* hold the copyright to the line of new designs. Veronique made a personal appeal to the board and the assembly of representatives met twice to discuss this very serious decision. The board voted to stop the relationship with *El Camino*. When asked about the reasoning, the president replied that it was impossible for Jolom to pay that amount of money to *El Camino*. With respect to copyrighting designs, the women said the designs were based on their cultural knowledge of designs and weaving. A K'in al advisor reported to me that the women saw what was being proposed as involving a grave loss of decision-making capacity and autonomy.

Challenges for Cooperatives

Nash (1993) and Eber and Rosenbaum (1993) have documented advantages and disadvantages associated with cooperatives. Advantages include mentoring for young girls, fairer prices for goods, development of women's political voice, particularly in the context of all—women cooperatives, ability to work at home, experimentation with styles and colors, wider markets, external aid, and greater respect and support from other women who share their language, worldview, and beliefs.

Disadvantages include: delay in getting paid, time commitment for meetings, increased tension from women's increased earning capacity and power, additional financial risks like transportation, possible jealousy or envy of village neighbors, internal cooperative competition for money and prestige, alienation from cooperative hierarchy decision making regarding pricing, and profits, male leadership in cooperatives, marital tension, and inadequate supportive outsiders' knowledge of marketing to adequately assist cooperatives in marketing their goods. Eber and Rosenbaum (1993:171) conclude

the most pressing problems facing cooperatives are their inability to provide weavers with reliable and stable income, the unfair economic risks weavers shoulder, and the need to give indigenous women greater control over administrative decisions and functions.

Economic and Political Autonomy

Recently, a veteran US author and weaving cooperative business developer who has worked in Chiapas for thirty years said to a friend of mine that “Cooperatives usually, are basically formed for outside funding” and that “co-ops will not produce social change in the context of a Mexico which asserts it is democratic but it is not” (personal conversation, March, 2000). In contrast to this view, the Mayan women who have created the weaving cooperative, Jolom Mayaetik, feel that their work involves not only economic but political commitments and goals. Their assertion of identity as Mayans and women informs their practice within Jolom and K’inál. Across several generations of organizing, the cooperative has made tangible strides in developing indigenous women’s representation, voice, leadership, and outreach, but constant economic and time pressures shape internal practice as well as opportunities for broader political participation. Economic improvements are very modest, uncertain, and uneven. Communities with fewer co-op members who weave popular items fare better than the majority of weavers.

In contrast to some of the cooperatives described by Nash (1993) and Eber and Rosenbaum (1993), Jolom women have asserted their autonomy and control of pricing, distribution of profits, marketing decisions, design decisions, and organizational decision making. Eber (2000) also documents the resistance of the women of Chenalhó to outside control of their labor and land through the creation of artisan cooperatives and through their work with the Word of God in the late 1980’s. In a meeting with representatives of the World Bank, Rosalinda, former cooperative president, was asked what the cooperative’s practices were. She said the women work together to “own their work, control the process, learn new skills, and know the process of commercialization” (April, 2000).

In a March 15, 2000 interview at Jolom’s office, I met with seven village representatives of Jolom to discuss internal Jolom decision-making practices, representational structure, and the relationship with K’inál. When asked about what the cooperative did, they responded that through it, women could take accounting, health, production, and mental health courses. All mentioned the role of the cooperative in getting higher prices for the hand-made items than through selling at private stores or through selling in the local market where prices were and are very low. They noted that when there was

money in the bank, the cooperative paid its members. They said that the women understood if they were not paid right away as Jolom was an independent cooperative, not state-sponsored. Women were patient and they understood that it was difficult but in the cooperative you got a just price. They said, the cooperative worked well because “we work *juntas*-together.” The representatives also told me that it was their role to bring information back to the village so that the women could talk about it. The purpose of the cooperative was to sell items in Mexico City and other countries and to be able to participate and to work with others rather than alone. They told me that communities had different items and designs to sell and work teams had been organized. Several new projects included four women learning pedal loom weaving, constructing dormitories with beds, and developing the use of natural tints. In contrast to this view, I heard women in one village complain forcefully about waiting for six months or more to be paid. Long waits for money are not uncommon. Jolom is working to make monthly payments to all of the members.

At the same time that the representatives described economic and educational dimensions of the cooperative, all of them also discussed the political aspect of the cooperative’s work. They said, “In a previous cooperative, women didn’t participate (in politics). We don’t



Figure 17 Jolom Mayaetik members march against militarization and war in San Cristóbal. Courtesy of the Jolom Mayaetik archives.

separate (political and economic participation).” They mentioned participating in marches, creating resolutions, conducting meetings, and group discussion. They saw the cooperative’s internal political work as making group decisions, creating agreements, choosing a president and representatives, and setting term limits. They said that the president’s term was no more than four years and that this was her *cargo* (term used to also describe traditional community obligations). They summarized saying, the purpose was to get rights for women; “the cooperative is for us together, for the women. We can’t separate causes, actions, selling, and weaving.” Like Rosalinda, these Jolom representatives see economic and political autonomy as inter-related goals.

The women mentioned having problems with creating a catalogue and difficulty commercializing. At the time, they added that they had to rent their store and central production site. When asked about who had control over what items would be produced, they answered that K’inäl worked with Jolom on new projects but the project ideas had to be decided by both organizations together. When a new project emerged, representatives brought information to communities for discussion and decision and women in the communities made the final decisions regarding new design projects.

Participatory Democracy

Nash (1993) and Eber and Rosenbaum (1993) outline the potential problems which can emerge within cooperatives. Reactions to women’s involvement can range from gossip to death (Nash 1993; Diaz 2001. See text in Appendix 1). Eber (2000) suggests that many women stay out of cooperative work due to fear of familial and marital disruption. When I met the first president of Jolom, she told me that “She loved to talk with women” but that she suffered in her community from fellow villagers, particularly men, who called her a whore as she traveled to San Cristóbal unescorted and she walked on the streets alone. She was not yet married, and was gone from the village a great deal.

In the summer of 2000, the women of Jolom spent a great deal of time confronting a situation of internal disagreement and the public circulation of complaints and grievances. In response, Jolom’s president traveled repeatedly to every cooperative village to meet with members. She also drafted and circulated a letter responding to the complaints. Two special assemblies were held to air concerns and

members who attended signed a letter attesting to their shared views and resolutions. The seriousness and unanimity of this response was demonstrated by all of the women's signatures and thumbprints on the resolutions of the meeting. The points they raised concerned the issue of handling complaints through open discussion in an assembly rather than by letter. They also acknowledged that assuming office or even participating in the cooperative could be met with criticism from community members who did not respect women's rights and autonomy and that such discord could affect the organization.

The Jolom membership also affirmed the right to organize independent cooperatives and the need to respect all such civil society endeavors. The advisory relationship with the women's NGO, K'inál Antzetik, was clarified, as was the representational structure of Jolom and the voting patterns by which women became officers. The membership challenged the former member's claims and commended the person for her work, leadership, and for her sacrifices and concluded by pleading for respect and understanding and by offering an invitation to the former member to bring her concerns to an assembly for further discussion.

Young women who defy traditional, gendered, community norms regarding marriage, fertility, education, and independence pay a price for their actions. When those same women complete their terms as President, it is nearly impossible for them to return to their village of origin as no position exists for them. Similarly, few occupational positions exist within Mexican society for indigenous women leaders who traditionally have lower educational levels but powerful experience and status as political organizers and speakers. Preparing young, indigenous women via advanced education and training to work in *mestizo* contexts is a current need and program.

The generation of young women also presents challenges to the cooperative. As young women leaders leave their communities, move to the city of San Cristóbal, and participate in the cooperative, they challenge traditional norms for early marriage and childbearing and gain the opportunity for more individual freedom. This younger generation's individualism presents a new challenge to traditional practices based on community and consensus-both within the community and the organization. The greater independence of city dwelling members of the cooperative and the board and the officers' need to travel internationally can arouse suspicion among members who live

in mountain communities. Jealousy and suspicion emerge between young women who stay in the community and those who leave and between members of the cooperative itself. Conflicts over power and authority also occur between members and leaders. Such tensions are intense and produce sadness, stress, and even illness. In 2002, new positions, *las consejeras de vigilancia*—oversight counselors—were created for long time members of the cooperative with the moral authority to supervise women in the city, to aid in conflict resolution, and reflect on the direction of the organization (Field notes 2005; Schütz 2006).

Economic Viability

As has been discussed, indigenous women's organizing is in direct response to the worsening economic conditions and their neoliberal roots—privatization, SAPS (structural adjustment programs), and NAFTA. Organizing collectively creates solidarity and gives access to larger and more diverse markets, but the earnings are still minimal. From 2006–9 at the International Folk Art Market, the Jolom president and I participated in the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)—sponsored workshop on international craft marketing. As part of that workshop, we calculated the wages for weaving a shawl and it turned out that Jolom was paying slightly above minimum wage. While there is great variability in what the weavers earn given complexity of design, fiber, and popularity of the item, Jolom is thinking about earnings. Although the return is small, Yolanda Castro Apreza (2003), advisor, reports that the women gain a sense of economic independence through their monetary contribution to the household, "It gives me money for my soap. It gives me money for my oil. It gives me money to buy my corn, even if it is a little."

Creating greater and consistent financial return through diversification, education, and networking was one of the major impetuses behind the construction of the new Jolom Center in San Cristóbal, the external marketing strategy, new product innovation and collaboration with the Paris design collective, *El Camino*, as well as the decision by key members of the cooperative to pursue more education and training (LaCroix 2001). Having enough money on hand to pay all of the weavers at once on a routine basis remains a huge task—one that Jolom is tackling through product innovation, increased

production, and international marketing and that US allies are addressing through larger sales event development and marketing.

For the young, indigenous women moving from the mountains to the city, Jolom has become a safe place between the restrictive but known nature of traditional community life and the potentially more autonomous but racist, unknown, and dangerous *mestizo* world. K'inäl's accompaniment of the women in Jolom and Jolom's internal organizational process and mentoring of emerging leaders has produced one of the few cooperatives in Chiapas, perhaps worldwide, with a developed internal democratic practice as well as an international presence which involves sending its indigenous women leaders abroad for political and economic work. Two out of five of the Jolom presidents have also completed their college studies and have returned to work with K'inäl in continued health and organizing work.

Jolom representatives have learned to meet with immigration officials for visas but this is very anxiety-producing. Jolom has had recurrent problems with visas as the US considers many of the younger members of the co-op's board "flight risks" and, therefore, refuses to grant them travel visas. This means that those with visas, like the current president, must travel the most, leaving her presidential work obligations waiting at home.

This intensive accompaniment has produced generations of committed, young (age 17–22) leaders taking on the responsibility of running the cooperative. Many are following in their mother's footsteps. This board's work is so intense that the majority of elected board members have been young, single women who delay relationships and childbearing in order to serve. Finding young women willing to take on this responsibility is an issue. The current president is the first single mother with grown children to serve in this position. Married women with children have too much work to do at home to serve on the board and to travel. They do serve as community representatives.

Jolom has been willing to take on long-term design collaborations and work with its members to weave new designs—no easy task. Jolom has also risked international business and has learned about shipping, duties, and very importantly, making deadlines.

As we travel across the US, a question that sometimes arises is the ethics of "contaminating" indigenous, Maya women and their culture through interaction in the global capitalist economy. This assumes

that they are not yet 'integrated.' As Vandana Shiva (1999:1) argues, "All domestic issues have been drawn into the global economy bringing women into direct collision with global patriarchal institutions." The question is one of the terms of the encounter. By choosing to control their production, policy-making, pricing, risk sharing, Fair Trade marketing, design and product innovations, and sustenance of traditional designs with innovation, women are creating and exerting internal power within a culture and society which they view as unequal and external political and economic power in their resistance to World Bank policy, *maquiladora* factory conditions, and corporate control of production and profit. That globalization is having a deleterious and adverse effect on women is recognized by them—thus their strategy to challenge it economically and politically on their own terms and with their expertise.

Lessons from Santa Fe

The experience at the International Folk Art Market in Santa Fe has taught us many things and increased the capacity of the cooperative to work at a higher level. Through workshops, we have learned about import rules, professional shipping and packing, overhead and pricing, display, intercultural communication, and marketing. While the cooperative has learned to do many things better, for example having every item priced and ticketed, and bringing enough inventory, despite four years of training with two different presidents, the training does not necessarily always produce rapid improved practice nor does information get passed on for a number of reasons.

From my observations, at the most general level, the workshops assume certain proficiencies in Spanish, math, reading, and cultural literacy. Tools like surveys that are used in evaluation, even if readable, are not necessarily comprehended. The logic of scaled responses and even surveys themselves come out of evaluation-centered practice. While Spanish is the first language for many of the participants in workshops taught in Spanish, indigenous participants have different mother tongues and less formal education. Also, while my comprehension of Spanish is fine, my capacity to translate is weaker and even in workshops taught in Spanish, I am retranslating concepts.

Beyond literacy and numeracy, and my own capacity to re-translate the Spanish and explain the practice, changing behavior is also linked to cooperative culture. First, the cooperative's president has a

four year term of office. Changes in officers are good for democracy but not always as good for business consistency especially when Santa Fe is an event limited to several days in the US while the cooperative's work goes far beyond sales and requires daily attention year-round.

In the cooperative, the president calls the shots for organizational practice. She has achieved her position by displaying courage and definitive practice. As mentioned previously, the cooperative's board is responsible for all textile acquisition, pricing, export, sales, and accounting and they carry out these responsibilities across a four year term. They have been chosen by the members because they have shown the capacity to lead and be trusted with enormous responsibilities.

The cooperative, therefore, has its own practice and culture. Some of the practices have emerged out of necessity and routine. These practices are then taught to the next generation of leaders very systematically in the six month mentoring process which precedes the next set of elected officers' terms.

While in Santa Fe, we might have learned that working through shippers like FedEx is safer as items are insured, FedEx is unknown to the women. Mexpost is known and has worked in the past, therefore, shipping with Mexpost, although uninsured, is used. Other shippers also require that cardboard boxes meet certain standards and that shipping lists are itemized and in English. Sturdier boxes are an out-of-pocket cost for the co-op and no one in Jolom can produce a list in English alone.

Pricing is another example where, while workshops are in Spanish and staff assist in working through computations, basing prices on individual household production costs, cooperative costs, and market demand has been difficult for the presidents with whom I have worked. The difficulties are again at a number of levels. While the women have learned to use calculators well, costing out things in terms of numbers of hours in a day, days in a week or month is not easy. The idea of an hourly wage is not normally used by the co-op. The calculations themselves are difficult. Increasing prices, as they were agreed upon in Chiapas, is also vexing. The cooperative has sought pricing advice from many advisors but the risk of not selling or not returning enough money is worse than under pricing, so prices have been constructed with labor, materials, and a specific market in mind but so that items sell. The question is not so much what the

market will pay, but rather what the cooperative is willing to chance. For the president, something is better than too little when she returns to pay the entire membership.

For the last three years, we have analyzed shawl prices. In 2007 workshops, we calculated what a large shawl should and could cost. Initially, we discovered that the price did not cover costs. In 2008, after the calculations, I urged that we change the prices upward and after much debate, we did and sold all of the shawls at the higher price. In 2009, the cooperative's marked price was once again lowered to 2007 levels, and given the economy, word informally spread among market participants that demand might be down and prices might need to go down, too. In our pricing workshop, we proceeded with normal assumptions and calculations and expert marketing advice confirmed the higher price. Regardless of this advice, the president was not willing to risk not selling at the higher price so the price was lowered from the previous year's but set higher than 2007.

Displaying items has been another bone of contention. In workshops, we have learned about different strategies to market items and to get attention. I have enjoyed these sessions and personally like working with display but trying to communicate why things would be displayed any differently than the way Jolom has been doing it for generations is a very difficult task. It involves translating both from English to Spanish but also across cultural and class aesthetics and tastes.

The cultural background for Jolom is the street market and the goal is to display as much as possible of every item hoping for any sale. Santa Fe is a juried show and items are judged for their artistic quality, innovation, cultural integrity, and sales potential. The display is supposed to convey artistic sensitivity and a splash of street market.

When the street market strategy is used in some of our US sales venues, particularly those where the framing of the event is art, the strategy can produce an unintended effect. The style of display can cheapen the art framing, therefore, contradicting the higher and legitimate pricing of the textiles as art. Putting out fewer items was explicitly mentioned at a show we did at a museum in New York. Along the same lines, I have urged us to give the tablecloths more display space in order to show the entire design and because they are one of Jolom's costlier items. I have succeeded in this discussion as the Jolom representatives have seen a positive outcome.

In contrast, arranging small items in baskets or in stacks was not accepted recently. In a previous year, small purses placed in a basket did not sell and the lack of sales was attributed to having them “clumped” in a basket and not laid out in the normal, linear, spread out fashion. Stacking items, though recommended by professional designers to vary the eye level in the booths, was termed “a mountain” and changed.

We have also had difficult discussions about what sells year to year. The Jolom presidents rely on memory which generally serves them well but they have forgotten; they do not do an accounting of sales by category of textile. I have shared my notes with the presidents and repeat what has sold well, but decisions are also made while packing. Given that each item at Santa Fe is accepted on the basis of photo submissions, the process has become somewhat easier but what about an item allows it to be chosen and sold is still sometimes unclear.

This year, Jolom had wool and cotton hand-woven shawls, scarves, tablecloths, blouses, purses, dolls, and kitchen towels and embroidered blouses accepted into the show. When we were unpacking and setting up, some large, pink acrylic crocheted purses popped onto the table. I questioned their appropriateness and was told that purses had been accepted into the show. I countered with but they are acrylic. I was told but they are handmade and purses. I replied that when the reviewers came by to check on the items being sold to make sure that nothing was out that was not part of the official application, that the purses would be a problem. The source of our disagreement was aesthetic. Yes, purses were allowed in the show but not acrylic ones. While I have never made such a decision before, I put the few acrylic purses back in our suitcase. This was very troubling for me and the president as the items had been packed as a personal favor.

On the other hand, cotton, brocaded tapestries, like the tapestry that is part of the huipiles, had been packed and shipped but had not been included in the cooperative’s photos. The president said they could not be displayed and sold. Given that the material and weaving were the same as in blouses, I felt that these could have been part of our booth.

Aesthetics and common practice also enter into issues under discussion for the last four years: using staples to affix tickets to textiles, labeling all items with the appropriate sewn—in tags, professional shipping with insurance and invoices, establishing solid storage in the

US, cost accounting, computerizing inventories, and communicating with US network members on a regular basis. Despite years of long and serious conversations about the need to establish a US business office and a paid staff person to do marketing, the presidents to date do not believe that this is possible.

The organizational and community sets of obligations and experience are still the strongest for the cooperative and at times clash with more formal business practice. Looser commitments and expectations on the part of a solidarity network—not all of whom who share the same degree of knowledge about or commitment to the cooperative—also challenge more formal business arrangements.

I would say that members of the cooperative are also at times too trusting of virtual strangers, entrusting them with textiles for long periods of time and with little communication about time frames or expectations. Although rigorous with money they obtain from sales and with accounting for the sales, they are vulnerable to long delays in payment sometimes with and sometimes without knowledge of an outstanding balance.

At times, Jolom and the solidarity network members operate more informally leading to the situations described above. Jolom members entrust individuals with responsibilities but good intention doesn't suffice when plans change and the failure to communicate leaves the co-op in a bind. This can lead to monetary, accounting, and shipping problems. Both Jolom and the solidarity network operate on a largely friendship basis rather than a business one yet when Jolom does not sell well or regularly, they are sorely disappointed and they must bear the responsibility and hear the challenges and complaints from members.

Despite substantial progress, Jolom is still not capable of self-sufficiency. Not speaking English is a major difficulty. They realize this and are studying English.

Bottom line, as Celia the president has said most recently in International Folk Art Market conversations, what the women want is justice. When asked in a recent workshop why the women weave, Celia responded, "to sell in order to live." The basics—access to clean water, human rights, indigenous rights, and ending militarization, extreme poverty, unfair trade, and biopiracy are all part of the Jolom Mayaetik reality and challenging these conditions means challenging state and transnational policies. Jolom has recognized this by being a non-state cooperative and by being politically autonomous, demo-



Figure 18 Rosalinda Santiz Diaz, former president of Jolom Mayaetik, giving an address on International Women's Day, San Cristóbal, 2000. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

cratic, and women-governed. The women organize, march, and rally around external crises and big events when and if they can but day-to-day economic survival and internal cooperative governance are the omnipresent issues. Political pressure on other issues like trade is being exerted through local, regional, national, and international economic justice and human rights NGOs, coalitions, and networks.

Resistencia y Autonomia (Resistance and Autonomy)

On International Women's Day, 2000, in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Mexico, I saw 9000 mostly Mayan, mostly masked women, and their infants and children march through the streets carrying banners and chanting slogans: End the Violence against women; Enact the San Andrés Accords; Nutrition and Healthcare for all; Respect the Indigenous People. Banners ranged from humorous, "I like when you give me hugs, I like when you give me kisses, but I like it most when you do the dishes" (Klein 2000) to calling for rights for indigenous people and ending the militarization of Chiapas.

K'inál Antzetik and Jolom Mayaetik were present and were key organizers and participants in the women's community meetings,

along with both local EZLN (Zapatista) groups and Civil Society organizations. Many women had come in from the surrounding mountain villages in open-backed trucks filled with twenty-five to thirty people; some had driven in trucks for ten hours or more. This was the first time that Zapatista and civil society women marched together in an event organized by both groups of women.

At the rally which followed the march, Rosalinda began greeting everyone including the international community

I am very pleased that so many women are participating and demonstrating. We know that not only in Chiapas are we marching, but all over Mexico and in other countries, too. Today, women from different countries like the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Spain, France, Switzerland, Italy and Germany are sending us greetings in this Zapatista women's march and women from the Civil Society. They, the international women, admire the courage of all of us who are marching and even though they are not here in the streets of San Cristóbal, they are telling us that they are here in their hearts, marching at our sides.

Next, she linked the struggles of US women for an 8 hour day, better working conditions, and workers' rights, during the 1850's, to all women who rise up for a "life with dignity, against oppression, and against maltreatment" (Diaz 2000 See full text in Appendix 4). She then specifically made a link to the women of Chiapas who had died in organizing for a new life and those who had died because of inadequate health services or due to domestic violence.

Today we think about these women and all the women who have lost their lives fighting for their rights; we think about the women who have fought for recognition and respect in their own homes, we think about all the women all over the world who have risen up for a dignified life, against oppression and against abuse. We also think about the women in Chiapas who have died for having fought to have a new life, about those women who have died because of a lack of health services, who have died from domestic violence.

Next, she moved to the topic of the women's struggle for a just life and one which included political participation by all women regardless of color, religion, language, place of origin, and age. She called for a life where women could be recognized as women and respected as such by others. Such a life would include freedom from threats by those not involved in the struggle and freedom from fear created by the military occupation which destroys the peace and life in the indigenous communities.

Our struggle as women here in Chiapas and in all of Mexico is because we want a life that is more just, where all of us can participate, regardless of color, religion, language, or place, with respect for each other. We know it is hard to participate because we receive many threats from our partners (men) who are not fighting. But we continue with the fight because in our communities, we want to make sure that one day we have a better life with our sons and daughters, even though we ourselves are not here. We know that the military is here, that they are harassing us and they put much fear into us, they don't let us live peacefully, they destroy the life in our communities. Not only with the military but also in our own homes we suffer because many times they do not recognize the work that we women do.

Having challenged economic and political marginalization and oppression, Rosalinda concluded her remarks by indicting the traditional, patriarchal system which sees women as only being able to work in the home.

But we see that we can do many things, not only do we know our work at home, we can give an opinion and decide what we want to do. We don't want it to be like it has been for so many years, they have told us that we don't have the right to do what we want. But sometimes we don't believe it and we think we can't participate, but it isn't like that. We can go out and participate in public, we can march, we can talk, we can decide whom to marry or to not get married, we can decide how many children to have and when. No longer will we permit them to force us to remain silent at home or in other places.

She emphasized that women have the right to make decisions to participate that go beyond the private realm to the public realm of organizing, marching, and speaking. Such rights also include deciding whether to marry and how many children to have and when. She concluded asking that the crowd raise their voices and shout with all force:

! VIVA LA LUCHA DE LAS MUJERES ! VIVAN LAS MUJERES ZAPATISTAS ! VIVAN LAS MUJERES ORGANIZADAS DE LA SOCIEDAD CIVIL !VIVA LA COMANDANTA RAMONA !VIVA ANA MARÍA ! MUJERES UNIDAS JAMÁS SERÁN VENCIDAS!

Long live the struggle of the women! Long live the Zapatista Women!
Long live the Women Organized in Civil Society! Long live Commander Ramona! Long live Ana Maria! Women united will never be defeated!

The leadership and practice of the indigenous women of Chiapas and their *compañeras* are inspirations for North American activists. Their vision for themselves and the world is made clear by the banner that

some of the women from Jolom carried in the International Women's Day March, 2000. In Tzotzil it said:

The women are making the words about justice for the whole world because we need unity.

In 2001, when Rosalinda traveled far away to South Africa to deliver her testimonial, she stressed the themes of peace, dignity, and women's freedom and linked the struggle in Chiapas to the struggle for global justice, the topic of the next chapter (See full text Appendix 1).

...I see and feel the other women fighting and suffering the consequences of wars which hurt us so very much. It is necessary to join our voices and to recover the strength of our hearts. Receive a warm greeting from all the indigenous women who are fighting in Mexico for a life with justice and dignity.



Figure 19 Pascuala Patishtan Jimenez and Pascuala, Members of Jolom Mayaetik, with friends, Kara Deyhle and Monica Sandschafer, from the U.S., at march on International Women's Day, San Cristóbal, 2005. Courtesy of Jolom Mayaetik archives.

CHAPTER SIX

DAVIDA Y GOLIATH: ROSALINDA CHALLENGES THE WORLD BANK

In the university you might debate what globalization is but we do not—
We feel it on our bodies every day. Lucía Méndez Guzmán—K'inal
Antzetik 2004 Women Confronting Globalization Tour in Oneonta NY

All domestic issues have been drawn into the global economy bringing
women into direct collision with global patriarchal institutions.
(Vandana Shiva 1995)

I begin this chapter with the story of Rosalinda, former president of Jolom Mayaetik, meeting with World Bank officials in March, 2000, in North Carolina. Next, I provide a brief overview of the impact of the World Bank development policies on Mexico and Chiapas and resistance to it by the Zapatistas and Civil Society in Mexico and North American allied organizations. I focus on the response of Civil Society by examining the philosophy, analysis, and work of the grass-roots women's organizations, K'inal Antzetik and Jolom Mayaetik, in Chiapas, Mexico. Finally, I review other resistance strategies to neo-liberalism that are developing globally and which link to the solidarity marketing strategy of Jolom Mayaetik. Rosalinda's analysis, millennial practice, and contemporary economic apartheid connect the economic justice movement's and Jolom Mayaetik's call for a "life with dignity."

Economía Muy Gringa en Chiapas (Very Gringo Economy in Chiapas)

Following the 1982 debt crisis and the ensuing implementation of IMF structural adjustment policies, Mexico restructured its economy via privatization, reductions in social services and wages, and export intensification (McMichael 2004). In 1994, the Clinton Administration pushed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the promise of trade relations that would open up North American markets for the benefit of commerce and consumers. NAFTA has produced widespread approval from corporate and political elites in the US,

Canada, and Mexico at the same time that it has engendered radical mobilization against its oppressive structures.

Critics point to NAFTA's deleterious effect on national governments' capacities to regulate transnational corporations, enforce environmental standards, protect labor rights, ensure living standards for their populations, and develop their own economies (Kamel and Hoffman 1999). EZLN *Subcomandante* (subcommander) Marcos sees NAFTA as the gringo project of making Mexico into a giant mall where one can buy Indians and women. He argues that neo-liberalism is a crime against humanity as it increases the divide between rich and poor and values peoples' worth in terms of work, blood, and sweat—or by how much they can consume (1998 Zapatista Encuentro: Documents from the 1996 Encounter for Humanity and Against Neo-liberalism and The Seventh Sun).

NAFTA—inspired trade policies which favor large agribusiness over small producers, have flooded the Mexican market with US government—subsidized crops like corn, undercutting the *campesinos*. The plummeting price of coffee on the world market in combination with the importation of corn has devastated the indigenous subsistence farmer. Currently, the price of imported corn has skyrocketed due to ethanol and corn sweetener production thus raising the cost of the Mexican staple food—corn tortillas (Ochoa 2007).

Rosalinda Encounters the World Bank

In spring, 2000, representatives from K'in al and Jolom were asked to meet with representatives of the World Bank (WB) to discuss artisan production. At the time, members of Jolom, K'in al and I were on a speaking tour in North Carolina in conjunction with an exhibit of Mayan textiles at Wake Forest Museum of Anthropology. The video conference with the World Bank was arranged by Jeanne Simonelli, Department of Anthropology at Wake Forest, in conjunction with a local woman who had World Bank ties. Before meeting with The World Bank, Rosalinda, president of Jolom Mayaetik, Barbara, member of K'in al Antzetik and advisor to Jolom, and I had heated discussions with Jeanne and her contact regarding World Bank policy in Chiapas and K'in al and Jolom's stated position of political and economic autonomy.

This meeting was done via teleconference; Barbara, Rosalinda, and I responded to questions from the panel of World Bank representa-

tives with PhDs in economics, political science, anthropology, and sociology, some of whom had extensive Latin American experience. The lead World Bank speaker had just completed an exploratory artisan production project in Peru.

The World Bank spokeswoman began by asking Rosalinda to share her cooperative's story; Rosalinda responded that she had some questions that she wanted answered first. She said, "I understand that you have given a lot of money to my country and I am wondering if this was a gift or a loan which has interest?" World Bank officials responded loans. She then added, "Did you ask the people of my country if they wanted those loans?"

Rosalinda continued and asked the World Bank to explain what it did in terms of economic development. Bank officials responded: We provide experts to train people in sound business practices, provide technical assistance and loans, and education. Rosalinda responded: Our cooperative also provides education, training in pricing and design. She then added:

There are changes in the women themselves. They own their work, control the process, they learn new skills, know the process of commercialization—we're all together. The change is for ourselves and is about more than living conditions—it is about empowerment (April, 2000).

She added that Jolom women assert their autonomy through pricing, distribution of income, marketing decisions, design decisions, and other organizational decisions like voting for elected representatives. Following this statement, Bank officials smiled politely and said, "Well that was quite an accomplishment for the cooperative to already be doing these things."

As a follow-up, Barbara and Rosalinda had asked me to contextualize the work of Jolom and to locate it in both a Mexican context and with respect to cooperative developments. I began by stating that many indigenous women sold items independently on the street where competition drove prices so low that women did not earn back the labor hours required to produce the piece. Additionally, Ladino store owners underpaid, diminished, and even harassed women.

Even within the realm of cooperatives, there were different ideas concerning the relation of power to gender, political voice, and economic distribution. State-sponsored artisan cooperatives had been in existence for decades. Some of the women from Jolom had experience with the major state-sponsored cooperative in San Cristóbal de

las Casas, in Chiapas. This model often had a man as the cooperative's director. He made decisions regarding distribution of profits, production, and marketing. He controlled the organization's power. In this context, women received roughly 10% of a product's price. Other models of cooperatives had developed in conjunction with the Catholic Church and independent organizing. The women of Jolom had also had experience with another state cooperative, but split from it to push for economic and political autonomy in addition to economic development.

Having developed the different models of cooperatives, I then turned to the Chiapas context and referred to a 1997 World Bank report on poverty alleviation and development in rural Mexico that Barbara, Rosalinda, and I had discussed the night before. The report noted the importance of involving indigenous people in the deliberations and particularly indigenous women. Following up on Rosalinda's remarks, I asked if the World Bank made loans only to national governments or to organizations. They responded, only governments. I added that in the case of Chiapas, wasn't it a contradiction at best that the bank would provide loans to people for a project via a government that was repressing and killing the very people the project was intended to help. As with Rosalinda's comments earlier, Bank representatives had muted responses (note: the interaction was recorded but technical difficulties resulted in no tape).

Neoliberalism—Blood Letting and Human Sacrifice

While ending world poverty and gender inequity are priorities on the World Bank's Website, the strictest adherents to neoliberal policies of structural adjustment have had anything but that experience. Neoliberalism is a theory of political economy that claims that the market is the most efficient mechanism for the distribution of goods and services in society, that private property and capitalist economic principles are the most efficient means for the production of goods, and that state interference with the workings of the market and capitalist production should be minimized. Getting governments out of providing social welfare expenditures from education to health and food programs and to restructure their economies toward exportation are goals (MacEwan 2001).



Figure 20 Chiapas March with sign “We Are Slaves to Neoliberalism” 2004. Courtesy of Jolom Mayaetik archives.

Neoliberalism provides the ideological basis for globalization; structural adjustment programs create an economic context at the national level conducive to globalization (Project South 2002). Mexico is often referred to as the Latin America poster child for the neoliberal project as it consistently pursued structural adjustment policies and implemented NAFTA, thereby, fostering the World Bank-IMF objective of “opening up the local economy” (Bello 1994).

In Latin America, since the 1980s, the whole continent has had a per capita growth of zero. In Mexico, since liberalization policies have been pursued, per capita real wages have fallen beneath their 1970 levels and have continued to fall sharply despite increases in productivity. Wages were cut 41% between 1982–1988, the minimum wage dropped 25% 1994–99 and today Mexican workers are earning 10–15 times less than US workers (Bello 1994:40; Witness for Peace 2001: 10; Binford 2005; NACLA 2004; Pickard 2005).

The economic imperialism of the US—dominated IMF and World Bank has manifested itself in Mexico in the form of NAFTA and Plan Puebla Panama. Demand for cheap labor in the *maquiladoras* and

fewer trade barriers to goods passing across the border drove the ratification process. With the passage of NAFTA, by 1996, real hourly wages were 26% lower than in 1994 and 37% below 1980 levels. During the first three years of NAFTA, Mexican citizens living in extreme poverty rose from 32 to 51% (Public Citizen 2000:3). Human right violations, environmental contamination, and labor abuses have become common practice. At its 10 year anniversary, NAFTA has generated intense debate within the US, Mexico, and globally and has resulted in mass internal and external migration as well as:

1. US job loss 2001–2003 = 2,400,000
2. new Mexican maquiladoras 1993–2002 = 1137
3. loss of agriculture jobs in Mexico from 1993–2002 = 1,300,000
4. 25,000,000 Mexicans are living in extreme poverty (NACLA 2004 XXXVII N4 Jan/Feb:6).

Global Dialogues on Social and Economic Justice

International feminist advocacy organizations have made suggestions to the World Bank regarding their policies and their impact particularly on women. This feedback from NGOs, researchers, and interest groups appears in the World Bank's new emphasis on gender initiatives.

US Anthropologist, Christine Eber (2000), who has conducted research in the Chiapas highlands for decades and worked on solidarity nationally, recommends that the World Bank reform and move toward creating a stronger social justice ethic through working with Fair Trade organizations and environmental groups. She suggests making human rights a priority. In addition, she urges the World Bank to make the work of the World Bank more democratic and to find a way to work with artisans at local and regional levels rather than through the state. Finally, she urges the World Bank to move toward more socially conscious international development by working with ATOs with human rights at the center of their agendas.

The Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), an international NGO that works to empower women in global policy decision-making and to achieve gender, social, and economic justice, is working with NGOs and other women's organizations to increase the voice of women and civil society in the WTO. They assert that "free trade" and other neoliberal policies like structural adjustment and recent trade-related property rights (TRIPs)

agreements related to food, disproportionately affect women negatively. They suggest that women need to be involved in policy-making at the WTO in several major areas including creating increased transparency and democratic participation in order to challenge policies which deny women economic equity and food security, threaten women's health and safety, and deny women's use of traditional healing and farming knowledge (WEDO 1999:8–9).

Activists at Third World Network (Shiva 1995) argue that globalization and international financial institutions have heightened gender inequalities as manifested in the low wages paid in maquilas and in the feminization of poverty. Members of The International Forum on Globalization (2002) and international economic justice activists from organizations like Kensington Welfare Rights Union in the north to civil society groups in Chiapas, call for the elimination of IFIs including the WTO, IMF, and WB and argue for their replacement with alternative UN institutions and frameworks, changed policies, and solidarity economics and politics.

Waldon Bello (2000), from the International Forum on Globalization, argues for deglobalization—a policy shift toward addressing social over market needs and focusing on the provision of local versus export needs. Deglobalization involves economic subsidiarity—the production of every possible item at community and national levels in order to preserve community.

*Securing Sovereignty and Political Voice: Civil Society Mobilization
against Globalization and Plan Puebla Panama*

The most recent incarnation of US economic policy for Mexico as embodied in World Bank and IMF development initiatives and mandates is Plan Puebla Panama. In Vandana Shiva's (1993:268) words, the "Disease is offered as the Cure." In 2001, days after thousands of Zapatistas and their supporters arrived in Mexico City, President Fox addressed the World Economic Forum in Cancun and announced his support for Plan Puebla Panama as the cure for Mexico's poverty through the maquiladorization of the poor southern states. In Chiapas, where salaries are less than in *maquilas* of the north, such a plan represents Mexico's response to the threat of labor forces like those in China where wages are cheaper than in northern Mexican *maquilas*.

In Chiapas, women are challenging dominant hegemonic Northern conceptions of neoliberalism, individualized conceptions of feminism

and human rights, and population and development policies—all of which have restricted indigenous people's voice and autonomy. Civil society organizing against neoliberal development challenges privatization, maquiladorization, and human rights abuses in the context of indigenous peoples' and women's experiences as such processes manifest themselves in village politics as well as macro level structural adjustment policies.

Pimping Maria from Puebla to Panama: Peasants, Petroleum, and Paramilitaries

In the summer of 2001, members of the *Coordinadora Regional de Los Altos de Sociedad Civil en Resistencia*, Chiapas, met with members in the northern zone to discuss the development plan. The most recent organizing centers on Plan Puebla Panama—the sequel to NAFTA. At a five hour workshop that I attended in the highlands, the participants discussed their views on the impact of the proposed development plan and noted that the development scheme would lead to: displacement of people, development of *maquilas* in Chiapas, loss of labor rights, decline in the health of the population due to working conditions and environmental pollution, increases in family and community violence due to destruction of the social fabric, and increased prostitution, alcoholism, and drug addiction. Throughout the workshop of 60 participants, mostly indigenous people from the area, several people facilitated analysis and questions, talking passionately and gesturing for accent; all the discussion was translated from Spanish to Chol, the language of the region. Following an outline on a large piece of paper that was hung on the wall, facilitators asked questions and discussed the answers listed.

Q: Who from the United States and Mexico is interested in the Region?

A: large corporations and manufacturers.

Q: Why are they interested in Chiapas?

A: “*Mano Barato*”—Peasants’ Cheap Labor (Hands)

Q: What are the implications for the people?

A: 1. Increasing poverty for women as much of their labor is in the household and socially reproductive and not valued by the market.

2. For the *campesina* her labor for wool, water, and wood gathering is essential but does not generate money. Women

who work in the field are not recognized as workers, only as housewives, and they do not have access to ownership of land.

3. Increased immigration of men for jobs resulting in family abandonment.
4. Women are cheap labor and are the primary target for *maquila* development.

Q: What did Chiapas have to offer besides cheap labor?

A: Petroleum and Other Natural Resources in Chiapas including: Biodiversity, oil, natural gas, water for hydroelectric power, uranium, wood, agricultural products including corn, cattle, beans, milk, commercial routes by water and land from US to Panama.

Q: What are the implications?

A: Transgenic development, plantations for palm oil, eucalyptus, and other agricultural products; huge construction projects for private ports, high speed trains, and large highways and the requisite displacement of indigenous people from those areas.

These issues were also presented with explanatory cartoons and drawings in a small paper pamphlet. After an overview of the issue, we broke into smaller discussion groups for more detailed analysis, and it was decided by the group that an all women's group should be formed in addition to the male groups. I went with an all women's group.

Our discussion leader began with the nature of work in *maquilas* and discussed the long hours, the supervision, alcoholism, and possible work dangers. Another facilitator talked about the management checking to see if women were pregnant and other forms of sexual harassment. We discussed how PPP meant increasing poverty, and particularly for *campesinas*, increased male immigration and family abandonment, low pay, and repressive jobs for women in *maquilas*. When one of the principal representatives from the *Coordinadora* arrived, the group asked a question about violence in the context of PPP. The representative began with intensity,

There are many forms of violence—domestic violence, sexual violence, and poverty which is violence to women's minds, hearts, and bodies, as they worry about the next day and how to get food.

She added that we all know what has happened to our sisters in Juarez where *maquila* workers are poor, forced into prostitution, raped, and killed. She ended with, "neoliberalism is a choice about our future.

What kind of a future do they offer. One where the rich get richer, and the poor, poorer” (Field notes, 2001). Overall, the proposed development plan was read as part of the ongoing attack on indigenous autonomy facilitated by the acceleration of privatization, change in constitutional laws regarding land, creation of new laws to facilitate development of factories, and expulsion of the poor via militarization and armed conflict.

Community Religious Analysis

Some Catholic religious communities inspired by liberation theology have also discussed Plan Puebla Panama (PPP) as a program designed to strengthen large foreign and domestic businesses, agribusinesses, and financiers by developing *maquilas*, by selling of natural resources such as petroleum, hydroelectric energy, biodiversity, and by building highways and tourist areas like beaches. The upshot included increased militarization, migration, arms, and drugs. The analysis of one group working with a diocesan catechist in San Cristóbal saw PPP as part of NAFTA, the Free Trade of the Americas (FTAA), and the globalization of Latin America and as centrally important for US control of commercial and communication channels. Militarization was viewed as central to this project.

In addition to the economic analysis, a short summary paper of the Catholic group discussed the impact of such development on the spirit of the people and the Catholic Church and saw, as Max Weber (1958) theorized a century earlier in Europe, capitalist development being used to create individualism, competitiveness, and greed that would undermine the community spirit. Protestant Evangelical churches were analyzed as part of this project as they emphasized individual over community values as espoused by the Catholic Church, values which would be necessary for the success of neoliberalism. Thus, neoliberalism was viewed as a threat to the Catholic community and church.

Economía Muy Gringa y Resistencia Contra Ella—Very Gringo Economics and Resistance Against It

In 2002, brutal, unprovoked violence—including beatings, house destruction, and arrests against indigenous people in the community of Marqués de Comillas located in southeastern region of Chiapas—prompted a large August sit-in demonstration (*plantón*) on the plaza



Figure 21 Civil Society in Resistance Banner at Protest in San Cristóbal, Chiapas, Mexico, 2002. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

in front of the famous cathedral in San Cristóbal. At the event organized by the *Coordinadora*—civil society in resistance—war was read as a global development strategy; huge, vibrant banners read “parasitic system, criminal fluctuations of money, economic terrorism, globalization of Anglo-Saxon terrorism, avarice, and hardship” along with Mayan glyphs and words. A huge, dark, downward spiraling cloud of evils like Dante’s inferno, depicted US, Ku Klux Klan, British, UN, and Israeli flags, symbols for oil, Nazis, uranium, the united forces of the World Bank, WTO, IMF, and Interamerican Bank, death, PAN and PRI, and dollar signs. Demons smiled and danced through fields of exploding weapons, fighter jets, mushroom clouds, and guillotines while faint symbols for music, love, and freedom of speech were marked censored and crossed out. Next to the swirling nightmare, the world, a fragile Christmas ornament surrounded by swarms of missiles, satellites, and bombers, was clutched by the talons of the US eagle, and together, they were being sucked into the web of dark terrorisms. All of these images were swimming in a pool of bright, red, blood cells. Economic and political terrorism were paired and linkages between brutal neoliberal economic regimes, militarization, paramilitarization, and human rights abuses were explicit. This intense

political banner identified the architects of globalization—the US and Britain, the IFIs, transnational corporations (TNCs), and the UN, their practices—facism, militarization, and their opposition—civil society in resistance and explicitly Mayans.

At the first Hemispheric Conference against the Militarization of the Americas held in San Cristóbal, Chiapas, in March, 2003, the economic, political, and military dimensions of globalization were similarly correlated and exposed. Testimonials and research on the buildup of US military forces in Costa Rica, Colombia, Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Honduras, Cuba, Aruba, Curaçao, Peru, Bolivia, and those proposed for Argentina, as well as the use of US government intelligence, corporate, World Bank-related environmental groups, and university interventions in regions rich in biodiversity, water, and natural resources including oil, in areas like Chiapas, were explored in depth during the four day conference. 1000 participants from 28 countries shared stories of the death and misery toll of neo-liberal terrorism as well as strategies for hope and North-South solidarity to forge resistance and alternatives.

A highlight of the conference was its emphasis on economic, paramilitary, and military repression and its particular impact on women and indigenous peoples. A representative from Puerto Rico testified that the bombs that were dropped on Iraq were first tested in Vieques and civilians in both places paid the environmental and human costs. Women from Guatemala reported on the resurgence of paramilitary actions in their country. The US/Canada delegation outlined the impact of militarization on women in the north. Sheri Honkala, of Kensington Welfare Rights Union, an NGO for the poor and homeless in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, gave a dramatic address linking the criminalization of the poor and homeless in the US to the militarization of the US and government spending priorities. To a packed and hushed audience she said:

The US houses the School of the Americas so when will people understand organizing for the poor in the belly of the beast or the danger of the poor in the US getting organized against empire? The poor in the US should be seen as strategically important to all people who struggle against the daily terror of the empire. When will religious, labor and legal communities hear our cries and see the invisible faces of our kids? When a military base is built or a bomb is dropped, more kids will go hungry, more kids will die and become forever more invisible. Poverty is the root cause of war and if we are serious about ending war and

poverty in the US and the whole world, help organize the poor to speak for themselves 'cause we've learned important lessons from history. When those most affected by an issue are involved in the fight, we can end those conditions around the world and in the US. Speaking for ourselves, linking movements, no longer hiding the human rights violations of the US; we will take down this empire (field notes 2003).

The women's caucus echoed her sentiments in its final resolution which challenged US imperialism and militarization parading as liberty, democracy, and assistance. The women identified war as the device which converted women into objects and objectives and which utilized women's statuses as mothers and wives to generate terror and control in the population. Sexual violence was seen as a pervasive strategy of war. Specifically, the group mentioned Central America, where many women were disappeared and forced to denounce their husbands and children, and to witness their families' deaths. The document noted that women in Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico and other places, were hanged and mutilated; their pregnant wombs split open. Thousands of women had been violated. In "low intensity warfare," women are raped and families attacked to destabilize the resistance of those who oppose the injustices of the powerful. The final statement read: Women have proclaimed that the personal is political, and we now proclaim that the political is personal, that wars affect us directly and we say, "No to militarization and wars. For a peace with justice and dignity for all!"

They shared the perspective of 131 other organizations from southern Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador who asserted, "Given that any development plan must be the result of democratic process and not an authoritarian one, we firmly reject the Plan Puebla Panama. We condemn all strategies geared toward the destruction of the national, peasant, and popular economy, and/or food self sufficiency" (Call 2002:25). Their main goal is framed by a subsistence perspective (Shiva and Mies 1993) which emphasizes regaining self reliance and subsistence security, and fighting for lives with justice and dignity.

After years of civil society organizing and coalition building across sectors, K'inál convoked a National Gathering of Women with the National Front for the Struggle for Socialism (FNLS) on International Women's Day, March 8, 2007. The purpose of the gathering was to recover, honor, and document women's involvement in three decades within the Independent Democratic Movement (MDI) in Mexico. The gathering's objectives included:

- sharing organizing experiences and revisiting them in the new stage and context where the ultra right is in alliance with neoliberalism—an extension of capitalism
- recording and naming the women who have been disappeared, tortured, assassinated, and imprisoned. Recognizing that femicide is a crime of the state to which the Mexican government has had no clear response.
- recognizing that women's place in history has been invisible and that the struggle of women has been traversed by violence against women, dirty war, low intensity warfare, neoliberal policies which affect the poor most severely, organized crime which has transformed our daily lives and whose violence has many faces; and political repression, persecution, exploitation, oppression, and subordination.
- raising awareness that the political participation of women is important in order to transform the capitalist system; women are a fundamental part of the changes possible. Because of this, it's important for us to listen to other women's voices, conceptions, and practices in order to nourish our organizing process.
- ratifying our political position as respecting all forms of struggle (FNLS document 2007).

More than 600 people—indigenous, *mestizo*, *campesinas*, teachers—from many states came with their grassroots organizations to this meeting at the Training Center for Women in San Cristóbal. Each group carried large sacks of food—part of the communal meal that would be cooked by the men each night. In the evenings, the women slept on the floor, small children rested in the dormitory room with their mothers, and men slept on papers in the cold air outside. During day one, women panelists gave overview talks and activists gave testimonials of their struggles. On day two, the women were organized into tables of 50 participants, each with a facilitator and a recorder of experiences. One after another, told of her struggles—fights over access to water, privatization of electricity, false accusations and imprisonment, government repression, and land struggles. Among scores of powerful and moving testimonials, one long time community activist from northern Chiapas stood out. She began invoking the Old Testament story of the Israelites living under the Pharaoh saying,

The people are poor and have no money to pay. It's for this that we resist. Should we have to decide between lights and food? We have fought for our health, education, and against the privatization of electricity. We are animated by the people from all of the different areas who are here and the *coordinadora* gives us energy. Thanks to God for this movement of women. The struggle is hard but we do not have fear

in front of the Electric Commission. We can rest in jail (FNLS Encuentro Field Notes 2007).

From the discussion at the tables came the recurrent themes of problems with water and electric privatization, poverty, men's migration and their separation from their families, the struggle for land, lack of adequate medical care, women's marginalization in political arenas, political prisoners and rape in prison, and the need for women to be recognized as political and organizing equals. Cooperatives were mentioned as one way for women to come together to get more money for their artisan work.

Overall, the central theme was that violence against women is structural. Organizers argued that such violence manifests itself in many ways in private and public life through poverty, marginalization, exploitation, and subordination and that the dehumanization which is part of capitalism turns bodies into objects and exploits men and women as merchandise. FNLS documents argued that militarization, femicide, and the myth of a democracy are other dimensions of neoliberal and patriarchal control and subjugation which must be broken (Field Notes and organizational documents 2007).

It is not a random situation that so many conflicts and wars are being fought on indigenous peoples' lands as they sit on the bulk of the world's resources. States and transnational corporations are greedily eying those resources as potential private commodities. Jolom and K'inál's challenge of maquilas, privatization, and other dimensions of globalization and their linking of social and economic justice to human rights, connects them to global economic justice and indigenous rights movements and pits it them against the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, and much of mainstream American economic practice and policy—including majorities in political parties, educational institutions, and mainstream feminist organizations.

Mexico's investment in infrastructure and development associated with PPP continues. The US also continues its push for ratification of other trade and development agreements like FTAA. At the same time, resistance to globalization is swelling internationally and within the US. Those coming together in a globalization epicenter like Chiapas are making global linkages and networks for analysis and action which have resulted in actions including stalling FTAA, challenging the Mexican military's human rights violations and the US training of Mexican troops in techniques of torture at the School of the

Americas, and organizing against the WTO meeting in Cancun. Mass organizing on all fronts continues in Mexico and civil society resistance catapulted to the world stage in response to the Mexican government's injuring, killing, disappearing, and imprisonment of citizen activists in Oaxaca in 2006. While attention to the militarization of the Americas and growing world poverty has been overshadowed by the US invasion of Iraq—resulting in a direct funding crunch for some progressive causes—the role of state and corporate agendas in the privatization of Iraq's oil, military contractors in the conduct of the occupation, and the US practice of torture and other war crimes is more visible than ever. The next chapter takes up the solidarity network's alignment with our Chiapas partners on economic and health fronts.

PART III

TAPESTRIES

CHAPTER SEVEN

CREATING TRANSNATIONAL SOLIDARITY—LINKING ECONOMIC, HEALTH, REPRODUCTIVE, AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

If you want to have a 'global partnership' with an artesan co-op you should in the first place have respect for their lives and their work.

Barbara Schütz, K'inál Antzetik

Creating international fair trade marketing and forging international solidarity networks are strategies for addressing global economic apartheid and north south power realities but each of these sets of relationships involves complex, race, class, and power dynamics that must be addressed for successful and authentic solidarity to exist. As mentioned previously, the accompaniment work of Jolom-K'inál has been both local and global, with solidarity networks spreading across Mexico, the US and Europe linked through shared interest in human rights, Fair Trade, gender equity, and alternative development. In the following sections, I discuss Jolom, K'inál, and the solidarity network's transnational organizing work including the Fair Trade marketing of Jolom textiles through solidarity networks across the US and Canada, our reproductive health and women's rights partnership project with International Planned Parenthood, and economic solidarity with a rural health clinic. In each, I identify problems and conflicts as well as some benefits.

Women Struggling for Economic Justice through Transnational Economic Solidarity

Resistance to NAFTA has spawned intense dialogue North and South on globalization and pushed the agenda for economic development with a human face. Indians of Chiapas have risen in revolt against IFI/US intervention. Their hope is for a future that includes "a place in modernity within their own identity" (Gilly 1998: 331–32). As noted earlier, a long time economic organizer in Chiapas told me that the role for those in the north who support the struggle and movement



Figure 22 Kate, Celerina, Mica, and Charlene discuss pricing at Charlene's home in Berkeley, CA. 2004. Photographer: Bill Woodcock.



Figure 23 Jolom Mayaetik community representatives from Yochib, Chiapas, Mexico 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

for those in Chiapas is to create the same movements for social and economic justice in our own country.

The grassroots women's NGO, K'inol Antzetik, and Jolom Mayaetik, its sister Mayan women's weaving cooperative in Chiapas, Mexico operate in contradistinction to World Bank models. Their resistance to neo-liberalism exists in active community building, respect for indigenous knowledge and practices, collective organizing, and independent economic practice for the dual purposes of economic and political autonomy.

Jolom and K'inol see women's co-operatives as one mechanism that women use in order to sell their artisan products to secure economic survival for themselves and their families and to sustain community and women's decision-making. As mentioned above, the cooperative serves economic and political purposes. Women have come together to weave with the intention of earning more money than they could selling their items privately on the street. Organizers believed that many more women would come together with the hope of earning money than would for political discussion alone. In the course of their work together, women share information, talk politics and, therefore, form working groups that have personal, economic, and political roots and goals.

To challenge neoliberal development and the poverty that its related policies produce, many new cooperatives and collectives have formed in Chiapas. Jolom Mayaetik, an independent, women's cooperative with female elected leadership and participatory democracy practices, is an example of such a development. To challenge militarization and globalization, trade agreements, and political exclusion, a vibrant global civil society movement has been created, north and south, and Jolom and K'inol are part of that civil society movement. These efforts are linked in local projects, political actions, international solidarity marketing of textiles, educational tours and delegations, and global partnerships to secure women's health and reproductive freedom. The quest for human rights and lives with justice and dignity, frames all of the work.

Solidarity marketing through alternative trade individuals and organizations (ATOs) is part of the co-op's international marketing strategy. While we were attending the Alternative WTO meetings in Cancun, 2003, Vandana Shiva gave a stirring address where she argued that "Fair Trade is the mirror image of the WTO" (field notes). In

contrast to a system based on economic apartheid which disadvantaged small producers, a Fair Trade model provides economic security and protection for small producers' agriculture and livelihoods.

Jolom Mayaetik's participation in the alternative trade movement is an economic mediation and intervention. Having chosen to do external marketing of their textiles and doing so for years, in 2006, they formally became members of the US Fair Trade Federation for a time. This decision followed years of informal alliance based in part on not fully understanding the point of a membership fee and certification as they saw their practices as already "Fair Trade." Paper work also required time and translation from English. In our conversations about Fair Trade throughout 2005, I often got the impression that the women saw Fair Trade as something the global north needed to do—not them. Representatives from the north, including myself, routinely argued for the economic advantages of Jolom's participation in the fair trade network—particularly since Jolom met all of the Fair Trade Network criteria.

Jolom's approach as personalized, solidarity marketing engages us in relationships with people around the world. The relationship is greater than financial; people want to buy and market Jolom Mayaetik's items because of the products' beauty and fine craftsmanship but also because of the Jolom story of indigenous women's empowerment and self determination in the face of great adversity. As June Nash (Grimes 2000:175) comments,

where any remnant of social contact between producer and consumer seems doomed to annihilation... a new mediator has stepped in to rescue the moral encounter. This is the alternative trading organization ATO that mediates between the impoverished, often female artisans-cultivators of third world countries and the well heeled and politically conscious consumers of first world countries.

Jolom chooses to pursue an external marketing strategy as with increasing economic hardship, more indigenous women are weaving and selling their goods on the street, thus driving down the price for all textiles. To facilitate international marketing, for several years, the co-op has been working on creating a catalogue, in print and on-line. This means that first work has to be done on pricing, inventory, division of labor, storage, standards, markets, and tastes.

Work on the web catalogue in 2002 involved discussions of marketing issues in Mexico, US, and Europe. Manuella, president of Jolom, Barbara, Lucía, and I talked about which things sold where,

standardization of textile sizes, specialties by village, non-cash expenses such as labor used in raising sheep in wool production and, therefore, the need to compute higher costs although such costs were not usually recognized or charged by the women. This was a key point as the women thought of out of pocket costs like cotton embroidery thread as expensive and undervalued the time—consuming process of wool production from grazing to shearing, spinning, and dyeing. Another issue involved the president taking the lead on making sure that items are similar sizes when purchased by the co-op. This was a difficult negotiation for the president at the time as she was hesitant to reject items and instead compromised by discounting items in price when they did not conform to published sizes. Although every item is unique—when selling and talking about sizing I always say “one size fits most”—great variations in size and coloration could become issues for consumers used to ordering from catalogues or on-line. Similarly, having enough items on hand to fulfill orders and coordinating this across villages is a level of organization that web sales will demand. Insuring that the cooperative’s representatives have enough items on hand for speaking tours and taking into account variation in US markets by tastes of consumer and climates, Northeast US vs. California, for example, remains challenging. Shipping costs are expensive. Keeping track of the thousands of items produced by individual women in communities also presents a very real challenge for the Jolom administration at this time. It is done by hand with tickets, a numbering system, and many lists. New regulations for textiles involve sewing on tags with place of origin, washing, and fiber content information and itemizing and claiming items in English for import are difficult. International import duties, lost items, lost tags, and fines are also thorny issues for the cooperative.

In the US, Jolom marketing is done via individuals, solidarity groups, conferences, organizations, shops, museums, and the International Folk Art Market in Santa Fe, and often in conjunction with education, speaking tours, and political organizing on issues. In the past, Jolom worked with Mexico Solidarity and Syracuse Cultural Workers; currently they are linking sales to national Fair Trade Networks and education, human rights, and religious organizations.

In 2007, Jolom and K’inál convened the first international gathering of solidarity activists in San Cristóbal to inform the international solidarity network and to give the young, emerging Jolom leaders a chance to meet the international members of the network. The event



Figure 24. Members of Jolom Mayaetik at International Workshop in the K'inál Antzetik and Jolom Mayaetik Center for Training and Education, San Cristóbal, Chiapas 2007. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

consisted of a two day set of workshops. Participants came from the US, Spain, Nicaragua, and France, board members of Jolom, K'inál staff members, and Jolom representatives from the rural villages—some of whom were young teen women being considered for future positions on the board of directors. The agenda was listed on a chart. It read:

Evaluation
What has worked?
What have we had difficulty with?

Proposals:

Topics: better communication, Newsletter, new design productions, Jolom oral history

Discussion: financial, projects, funds for education, tours

Commercialization: credit cards, bank, textile storeroom, selling on the internet

Our talk began with an overview by Barbara, K'inal *asesora* (advisor) to Jolom, based on her work and research with Jolom over the last 10 years as well as evaluations done by other members of K'inal. In the overview, we learned about production and income distribution issues; variations in production by community, items, order, age and skill; and a lot about the difficulties that Jolom had experienced 2002–3 in their conflict with authorities. This was also the first time that some of the international network had learned of the distinction between civil society and the Zapatistas and that Jolom was part of civil society in resistance. We also saw first-hand how difficult this topic was for Jolom to discuss—the president could not bring herself to talk about the conflict and competition over power and money. This deep hurt was felt by her and the entire organization, and the pain of the conflict—the women feeling like they had been disparaged as women and as an organization—often translated into silence on the topic of politics in Chiapas and a focus on the cooperative and its organizing as it was easier and more empowering than dealing with the sad reality (Schütz 2006).

We spent the first day laying out the agenda and refining it and telling all of our life stories one by one. We also worked in small groups of one international person with one young indigenous member of Jolom, and another member of Jolom to translate from Tzotzil to Spanish. We shared with one another our names, where we were from, how we worked with Jolom, our families, what we were doing with our lives and each of us had to present each other's story to the entire crowd. This was quite difficult for the young women, many of whom had never spoken in public before. Some giggled, cast their eyes down, and tried to squeak out words to no avail. Eventually, all but one of us got something out. Again, everything was translated from Spanish into Tzotzil and English.

During breaks, I had the chance to talk with Veronique and Sophie, the women from El Camino in France. Although I had met Vero in Chiapas briefly in previous years, we both were always

running off to the next meeting or village; this was the first time I had had the opportunity to talk with her in depth and to observe her workshops with the Jolom weavers.

Because I had become the US person developing new large sales venues in the US and accompanying the Jolom women on cross country tours since 2002, over dinner, I met with Kara, a former US intern with Jolom who had had several years of recent experience with tours and travel, to share my thoughts on issues we needed to address at our workshop. During our tours, we often talked about improvements in process that needed to occur. My list included issues from raising wages to formalizing the US solidarity group in order to improve sales, marketing, communication, recruitment, and ultimately sustainability. I wondered if we should create a non-profit corporation (501C3) and hire a paid staff to do marketing and link more effectively with coalition partners. Kara noted web issues, US political programming, and paid interns.

On day two, we did skits about a normal day in our lives—one by women from the communities and in Jolom; the other by a group of four from international contexts. Women from the US and Nicaragua and four from Chiapas also met separately to discuss issues which arise in the marketing of Jolom textiles. We began with skits and lots of laughing. We all portrayed ourselves as super busy—cooking, working all day and into the night, taking care of children. The Northern folks were driving around a lot and seemed to feel more stressed—out by competing demands. We also had pets.

The Jolom group had been asked: What do we learn from the tours? What's hard? What would be helpful to you? In response they said, "It's hard that everything is in English. Airplane travel and airports are difficult." To the question of why they thought people want to be working with them they responded, "because we are a cooperative of women." What had they learned, "to get over fear, to go alone, and to sell well."

Each skit was followed by another team who laid out what people had learned from this international work, what was difficult, and what should be improved. The US team first responded to the question, what have you learned from the work with Jolom? Laurie from Florida said that the women have lots of determination. They have lots to teach people in the US about the cooperative's work. We all live in different communities. Charlene from California added that

the Jolom women work very hard and make beautiful things. The women are very strong. Myra from Nicaragua said that the women were maintaining their culture through their weaving and their other work. Laurie added that when the women talk of their work and dignity, it raises the consciousness of the people in the US—it has great value. When asked about motivations for working with Jolom, the group said that it was because they believed in Jolom's work; they had a rich culture. When asked about what they would like to change, the group asked for improved communication between Jolom and the international network, for example, what's going on in Chiapas? Also, the group asked for improved planning of events together so that time in the US could be used most effectively. What more could we do together? We could improve communication, create funds for health and education, create a US storehouse, create new ways to market, and raise the consciousness of the US people. Their comments echoed concerns that Kara and I had raised as well.

In subsequent sessions, I learned in more detail about the functioning of the French El Camino Project and Veronique's motivation for design development and their choice of large expositions two times a year in Paris as a marketing strategy. Solidarity-Fair Trade was not their market as sales were not as good. Instead, their focus was people interested in high end design and exquisite weaving. Vero and Sophie also shared some of the same concerns that I had—improving knowledge of international shipping and customs regulations, increasing wages for the board and earnings for the members, finding funding to pay for the international design work, and adding positions in order to facilitate the international sales and decrease the enormous workload on the Jolom and K'inal staff members.

While Spanish support for K'inal and Jolom was long-standing, we also learned of new initiatives being brought forward by a Spanish NGO fostering cooperation with Latin America. The NGO was working with K'inal to produce projects.

This was also the first chance that those from Europe had the chance to hear about the development of the US Solidarity network and our solidarity marketing strategy. We had created tours centered on conferences and local networks. I discovered that El Camino and the US Solidarity network had each heard the concerns about income distribution and cash flow—hence the El Camino strategy of developing designs for each community and biannual expositions; my idea of

using Anthropology conferences, one in the fall, the other in the spring, to anchor our tours and the evolution of the Santa Fe Folk Art Market as the third in the trinity of major events—thus creating more consistent income generation, artisan production, and income distribution with greater certainty and less wait time for money. We also learned that the development of the growth and success of the wholesale line for El Camino had changed some of the production patterns for the women. While most women weave every day, those with orders for El Camino would wait until the order came in to increase their weaving and women were choosing to weave for those items as they had an assured market and certain pay. Thus, women not weaving as part of a wholesale order were selling their items to the storeroom—a strategy which could result in their having a longer wait to sell items. This interaction of market and women's economic decision-making also had an impact on the items made with more traditional items—more complex, difficult, brocaded huipiles, tapestries, traditional pillowcase covers—being made less frequently and making up the bulk of inventory. Thus, we learned that the way our marketing strategies had emerged in the US and Europe, allowed Jolom to sell both types of items—the El Camino line going to Europe; the traditional items along with El Camino textiles going to US museums, Anthro conferences, and Fair Trade tours. The El Camino line also sold very well in the US and particularly at the International Folk Art Market as it exhibited the innovation of color and design with the maintenance of traditional Mayan symbols and expert backstrap loom weaving.

On day three, the cooperative had many tasks and could not afford the time to meet any more and members from France had workshops to conduct with Jolom weavers from the communities, so the three of us from the US continued meeting to discuss issues as they related to us. My idea involved developing a non-profit to coordinate communication and marketing in the US, grant-writing, and to create opportunities for donations which could lead to the development of badly-needed education and health funds, tour cost coverage, and popular education in the US. I advocated for the development of a paid position in the US to coordinate this network. Others felt working within Laurie's existing 501C3 which is linked to rainforest preservation and indigenous crafts as part of that strategy would be an easier way to go. We also met with a volunteer from the US who had an MBA in Sustainable Enterprises and we briefly chatted about ways

of improving marketing to tourists in Chiapas, to her networks in Oregon, and about issues with different types of business models. We all acknowledged that while Jolom had expanded its textile production, it was not yet in a position to meet increased demand that could be generated by people ordering on the web. Such a suggestion is usually the first recommendation that comes from consumers and some advisors from the US. We decided to pursue some form of a not-for profit organization—linking to one with whom Jolom and K'inál had historic relationships or creating a new one. I volunteered to create an electronic E-newsletter to link the beads on the rosary and to help coordinate tours more effectively, to participate in the US Social Forum, and to pursue grants for women's leadership that would allow us to develop intern possibilities in the US for Jolom women and create a paid US position for marketing, education, and solidarity work. I would also check in with Madre about linkages and intern possibilities.

In sum, a bottom line concern for me was improving earnings for the women as that translated directly into resources for families. I also wanted to increase community organizing, develop a US non-profit, and improve cohesion and communication. Laurie talked about having one of the Jolom women intern in the US for a year in order to learn the marketing ropes and English. She was also going to check out possibilities of her own organization. Kara wanted to work on popular education, connect US networks, and link to community organizing in the US. I personally decided having met Veronique and Sophie, that a trip to Paris to see their exposition would be great as we could also have access to textile and decorating—design folks in New York City and we could work on such a yearly exposition in the US, too.

After the meetings, I recommitted to more systematically tying in students to solidarity work. I have foregrounded the economic priorities of income production for the women and their families and communities out of necessity—hence my commitment to economic solidarity—but the need to connect up this generation with activism and a 30+ year commitment to community activism tug at me despite my experiences at the college and on delegations.

While I use a strategy that I have employed for community-based work and research in the US-academic courses with activist curricula to structure student involvement—such courses alone do not cultivate a commitment to “the long haul.” Teaching courses which focus

on women's organizing and emphasizing solidarity and fair trade work and networking with campus activists is a start. While my initial plan to create a Fair Trade store linked to the campus and housed in the community (see Appendix 10) never materialized, working on campus and in the community through house parties-a la Tupperware—maybe Mayawear—might become another avenue for marketing both textiles and solidarity. These concerns and ideas are taken up in more detail in chapter 9.

"Is It Not Enough that They Can't Eat?" What's Fair Trade and How Fair for Whom?

June Nash (2000:179) asserts,

In a world where indigenous communities are threatened by the predatory invasion of capitalist marketing, it [alternative trade] is an interim measure promoting the survival of peoples and their cultures. But... it is not a panacea for all the injustices in global exchange.



Figure 25 Hartwick College students in Jolom textile storeroom 2009. Photographer: Joseph C. Stillman.

Educating clients about how prices are set by the cooperative's leadership in consultation with the members and advisors is a continuing challenge and is part of the mission of the Fair Trade movement. Bargaining for lower prices occurs recurrently at Anthropology meetings and in other settings. A few "Fair Trade" groups and individuals that I have met in the US, some of whom are formal members of official Fair Trade networks, and others who link themselves to it philosophically, have pressured Jolom to lower prices for them so that they can "make it," and have bargained with me, women in the communities, and the leadership to charge lower prices for them without considering the impact of such practices on the collective nature of decision-making in the cooperative, the voice and responsibilities of the elected leadership, the autonomy of the women, and bottom line, the women's ability to eat. When confronted with these situations, I raise the question of how one would feel if US wages were renegotiated on a week-to-week basis. I do not believe in bartering or changing the prices so I defer to a cooperative member in such situations. Of the four presidents with whom I have worked, only one was adamant about sticking to the prices that had been set. The majority of the solidarity market respects the cooperative's decisions regarding pricing.

Global Northerners' understanding of cooperative decision making and pricing concerns relative to their profits is minimal. Few think of the sales needed to pay 186 women or covering all of the cooperative's costs. Few have calculated the actual earnings of the weavers. There is also a range of earnings that exists within the cooperative as women's earnings vary by the amount of time they weave, the demand for the products they choose to make, and if they are weaving for the new design line—an issue that also involves learning new and difficult weaving designs.

Returning to the example of a small shawl, it takes a woman one week of weaving for four hours a day (an average number of hours women weave) to make a shawl. Her pay for this item is 240 pesos, that is 8.57 pesos or 57 cents an hour based on an exchange rate of fifteen pesos to one US dollar. If calculated for an eight hour day, this would come to 69 pesos per day. The minimum wage for Mexico is 53 pesos. This is a best case scenario as shawls are very popular items and take much less time to weave than brocaded items like blouses or tapestries. When the co-op sells its textiles, each woman is earning more than she would by selling on the streets but not as quickly.

When Jolom members have to wait months for payments, they are selling their items along with everyone else at the church square in order to get cash. Our calculations in Santa Fe also revealed that the cooperative's total costs are not being covered.

Backstrap loom weaving is a labor intensive art. To preserve it and to pay the women fairly for their skill will require educating the public and cultivating a view of Mayan weaving as art.

Within the Fair Trade movement, some representatives from the global south voiced concerns in Cancun in 2003 regarding western Europe controlling the certification process resulting in a long, multi-year wait for those in the global south. Representatives from Latin America called for regional autonomy. With textiles, there is no certification process equivalent to coffee in place at the international level. Retailers may go through the Fair Trade Federation, with forms in English, and obtain approval from that organization. Another channel is through organizations like Ten Thousand Villages, of Mennonite origin, which has independently-franchised stores carrying Fair Trade items from around the world. Regional certification has emerged subsequent to the Cancun meetings.

Other economic justice activists in the US worry that the Fair Trade movement privileges the needs and concerns of those in the north and diminishes the autonomy, leadership, and voice of the producers. The alternative WTO and Fair Trade Conference meetings in Cancun were in part meant to air concerns and posit solutions to some of these difficult power issues. One initiative that northern Fair Trade coffee roasters and distributors, like Dean's Beans, has begun is pre-harvest financial support of the producers. Jolom does not require it. I, personally, advocate pre-payment with all of the organizations and individual distributors I work with so that the individual weavers will get paid more quickly.

At our most recent participation in the International Folk Art Festival in Santa Fe, those who placed wholesale orders were asked to make a down payment of 50%. The move within our US solidarity group toward concerted investment in economic and social infrastructure is being made slowly and on a rather individual basis.

Linking ourselves and our students to organizations pursuing this model North and South can become and has become part of grass-roots political organizing. As activist scholars, we can foster the sharing and acquisition of such skills by participating in skill building workshops on alliances, lobbying, community-based research, and

alternative development with community members, students, and colleagues. Using our organization and its resources more strategically to link to existing local, national, and global organizations would be helpful. I have tried to do this in the last few years by facilitating my Chiapas colleagues' "Women Confronting Globalization" speaking tours in the US initially with Mexico Solidarity Network and other organizations, selling items at AAA and SFAA conferences and at all lecture sites, creating popular education Fair Trade events and festivals, and working on women's health issues through a Global Partners grant that we obtained through International Planned Parenthood as well as through grants obtained in the US for a rural clinic in northern Chiapas. As mentioned earlier, beginning with a serious look at power, agendas, and community needs and values is critical.

What I sometimes refer to as "the northern solidarity network" is a grassroots, informal, network that has emerged to do textile marketing, North-South solidarity work, and popular education on fair trade, health, globalization, collective organizing, and human rights. For the last few years, with counsel from my colleagues in Chiapas, I have been exploring the best way to join forces with other organizations doing North-South work in Chiapas and I have partnered with a number on projects. My local work with Jolom Mayaetik and K'inál is linked to a US solidarity group of volunteers willing to sell the cooperative's textiles and to participate in public human rights work. As a US fair trade sales coordinator, educator, and grant writer, I communicate with other network supporters to create tours often around each year's major fall or spring Anthropology Conference. Long time Jolom supporters also network in their regions to set up speaking tours, museum visits, and to develop new markets. Through my college, I also run a 3–4 week global justice course in Chiapas in conjunction with my colleagues in Jolom and K'inál as a credit bearing course for college students and community members (see next chapter).

As in Rosalinda's speech of 2000 where she linked the struggles of garment workers in the US to Mayan women's struggle for autonomy and rights, the Fair Trade movement, Living Wage campaign, anti-sweatshop, anti-globalization, anti-militarization movements/Anti School of the Americas in the US are part of the struggle in Chiapas. Pursuing these connections via popular and formal education is developed in chapter 8.

Securing Reproductive Freedom: Mayan Women's Health and Health and Human Rights

Neoliberal development policies, the poverty they produce for the majority in Chiapas, and militarization all negatively affect health and violate the fundamental human rights of women, their children, families, and communities in Chiapas. The scope of this structural violence in Chiapas is reflected in high infant and maternal mortality rates, infectious diseases, and malnutrition (SIPRO 1999), therefore, economic solidarity must include addressing the health consequences of poverty.

In 1995, the Beijing platform for action contained a section on gender-based violence which outlined physical, sexual, and psychological harms to women including acts of violence committed during armed conflict, forced sterilization and abortion, and female infanticide (Agosin 2001:88). In 1996, Mexican President Zedillo declared that his government supported the Beijing Declaration and that it



Figure 26 Pascuala, secretary of Jolom Mayaetik and Merit, member of K'in al Antzetik, as invited speakers at the United Students for Fair Trade Conference, Chicago, 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

was moving forward on its program for women in the areas of poverty eradication, improving health services, human rights, and indigenous rights. In making its case, the Mexican government noted that it would commit to a new development strategy focused on the human aspects of development, where women's issues were seen as central. Special mention was made of the need to work with the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) to foster the inclusion of a gender perspective in national population policy (WEDO Report 1996). At the same time, Mexico was increasing the militarization of Chiapas and systematically denying basic human rights to the indigenous people of Chiapas. Studies confirmed both (Hartman 2002:269) sterilization abuse in public Mexican hospitals and mandatory pregnancy testing in the corporate *maquiladora* sector.

The contradiction between the rhetoric of women's human rights and the reality of women's deaths is dramatically revealed in the case of maternal mortality rates in the highland region of Chiapas. As Freyermuth (2001:60–1) has argued:

Maternal death, along with infant mortality, is a useful indicator in evaluating the quality of medical attention, since the problems related to maternity and infancy are 90% curable. Maternal mortality in Mexico has not been a priority for the health sector for at least two decades; instead the focus has been on birth control programs euphemistically dubbed, "family planning" or more recently "reproductive health."

In light of a history of forced sterilization programs and high rates of maternal mortality and other problems related to pregnancy and childbirth, indigenous women and grassroots human rights activists alike find an overemphasis on birth control and the lack of priority attention to maternal health issues and access to basic socio-economic resources, further expressions of institutionalized racism and genocide. As summarized by a medical intern in the highlands of Chiapas (Freyermuth 2001),

[This] "Chiapas Mission" was really genocide because the aim was for women to have no more children. The people want to be cured of diarrhea, bronchitis, pneumonia, and you have to tell them, 'We don't have any penicillin'...there are no cures, nothing to save you, but there's tons of birth control.

In response to these fundamental violations, indigenous people have developed autonomous communities and laws, among them is the Revolutionary Law for Women (1993) which assert women's right to

health, nutrition, education, fertility choices, marital status, and freedom from domestic violence.

While one of K'inal's early grants was for reproductive health, neither group's work has had this as a central focus. In 2001, an International Planned Parenthood Global Partners program was initiated between a local Planned Parenthood in Oneonta, New York, with whom I had been a long term activist and recent board member, and K'inal and Jolom in Chiapas. As one of 26 such collaborations in the world, and the only one between a clinic in the US and a women's cooperative rather than a health provider in the global south, the partnership was viewed as innovative. Yet, such a partnership brings into focus the varying conceptions of goals that grassroots NGOs and their constituents might have in contrast to goals and assumptions made at the International BINGO (Big International NGOs) level. The conflicting views over priorities enunciated by the Mexican government, UNFPA, indigenous women, and human rights advocates outlined above hint at potential ideological rifts in the women's NGO network, a situation which has the potential to undermine global alliances and women's security.

At the international level, Betsy Hartmann (2002:270–71) reports that deliberations at the UN population conference in Cairo were characterized by conflict between grassroots human rights groups and large, mainstream, northern NGOs over their interpretations of reproductive health. As a core member of the Committee on Women, Population, and the Environment, Hartmann saw first-hand how compromises made in Cairo between more critical women's health movement groups and mainstream groups skewed the agenda toward population control and away from reproductive health concerns linked to issues like structural adjustment, the debt crisis, and globalization, thereby, opening the door for collusion with the neoliberal agenda. In 1999, the earlier ideological scuffle produced a new concept of partnerships between NGOs, states, and the private sector. Overall, such alliances may use "gender as a way to obscure class inequalities," (Hartmann 2002:274) define women's empowerment in narrow economic terms, and exchange coercive methods of population control for discipline through individual use of birth control or "choice." Through such relationships, "southern NGOs can lose their autonomy and become beholden to northern foreign parties" and move grassroots groups from advocacy to provision of services to become the "showcase" for the services that the government has cut.

In the case of women's organizations that remained silent about Peru's President Fujimori's forced sterilization programs, partnerships led to the silencing of critical voices. It is important to keep in context the continued practice of organizations like the World Bank's linking of aid to achievement of population control targets and the fact that women's health is most compromised by the violence of poverty, malnutrition, lack of clean water, sanitation, and health-care—outcomes of neoliberal policies like structural adjustment. A narrow emphasis on family planning bolsters the mainstream assumption that over-population is the root impediment to development and leaves uncontested, neoliberal economic logic and policies which globally impoverish people and cause ill health.

Shiva (1993:293) warns of ideological assumptions and conclusions which underpin most of the population policies of the UNFPA, the World Bank, the Population Council, and other international agencies which are part of development and loan packages. She cautions against marketing coercive population control policies as 'reproductive freedom' or 'individual rights' and asserts that isolating "individual sexual and reproductive behavior from the social fabric can only be harmful to women, in the South and the North." She sees reproduction in the contexts of gender relations, the sexual division of labor, political and social conditions, and as influenced by capitalist and patriarchal ideologies and practices and stresses the need for women to regain autonomy with respect to sexuality and procreation.

The issue of contradictory aims is serious and must be addressed in any consideration of security. Rights advocates have organized within the context of the UN and have utilized its human rights framework (UNDHR) to challenge human rights violations. Yet, the UN contains within it, links to the very organizations like the World Bank, IMF, and UNFPA, whose development policies are being challenged for their undermining of basic socio-economic human rights and survival.

As Petchesky and Judd (1998) argue, work on reproductive freedom encompasses potentially hopeful as well as hazardous outcomes. In Chiapas, Mexico, most Mayan women, and many of those working as women's advocates in civil society, have clearly viewed the role of state-sponsored family planning projects as harmful. Reproductive freedom is seen as a euphemism for genocide by some researchers and citizens alike (Freyeremuth 2001) at the same time that it is also viewed as a matter of individual decision by others. It is in this difficult

context, with strong local concerns, a rich Mayan health and healing heritage which is often not heard, and a dominant, international, northern BINGO, that a partnership was to be formed.

In relation to how funding shapes projects, I offer the following cautionary tale about our solidarity work. For a project that Jolom, K'inál, the local Planned Parenthood in Oneonta, and I created with International Planned Parenthood for the Global Partners Program, I would ask, who controls money, decision-making, the computers, the travel? The view from the grassroots in San Cristóbal and BINGOs in Washington, D.C. can be quite different.

International Planned Parenthood and Global Partners' Expectations

In the context of the Bush administration's cutting of funds for international family planning and a harsh climate of opinion regarding reproductive rights in the US, International Planned Parenthood developed its Global Partners Program to mobilize support for international family planning. Through international collaborations, the hope was to share expertise and experience to "improve respective public policy, sexuality education, and service delivery programs" and to ensure that the US "government protects and advances the right of individuals everywhere to make their own sexual and reproductive health decisions" (Rights Have No Borders 2001).

The Global Partners grant as developed by K'inál and Jolom was named, "Women Have the Right to Decide on the Number of Children They are Able to Have and Care for" (see page 150). Its objective was for participating women to gain an understanding of their reproductive rights and for them to be able to integrate and apply these rights within the framework of their indigenous culture. It was informed by the Revolutionary Law for Women and rights to health, nutrition, education, fertility choices, marital status, and freedom from violence.

Specific goals outlined in the original Jolom Mayaetik/K'inál proposal included:

- recovering the knowledge and language of indigenous women about their bodies—menstruation, sexuality, maternity, birth and female disorders and care for the body
- strengthening women in the revitalization of their rights
- editing materials in indigenous languages for use in community schools
- working principally with young women who are making new lives

- creating a consciousness among men, fathers and husbands concerning the necessity for women to make decisions concerning their bodies and sexuality
- documenting cases of forced sterilization and analyzing this problem making it clear that this is not the way. Family planning is very important for the health and life of women and men.

The local partner for the grant was a Planned Parenthood affiliate in Oneonta, New York. They assumed some responsibility for acquiring basic health education materials to be used in the community settings, creating a communication channel with the representatives from the two sister organizations in Chiapas, and facilitating mutual education. Discussion of the type of materials provided was minimal; it was assumed that most existing materials would be sufficient for translation and use. The grant did not allow for purchase of books—the first and only request that K'inäl and Jolom made was for “Our Bodies Ourselves” in Spanish. I had to pay for it myself. The first visit of our Chiapas partners to Oneonta, New York happened in 2002. The first visit by the US group occurred in September, 2003.

From having sat on the Board of Directors of our local Planned Parenthood and from having spoken with members of the board about this grant, and to members of International Planned Parenthood, I heard the dominant view from the North being population control and family planning as solutions to the global South's problems; the same can be viewed as genocide by many Mayans and their supporters in Chiapas, but Mayan women do not have a monolithic view on birth control.

The nuns I work with in Chiapas are opposed to all forms of birth control and abortion—except abstinence—but have keen interests in reproductive health as they are the principal providers of birth services in their community and see the impact of malnutrition, difficult births, and botched abortions up close. Members of Jolom have varied views regarding family planning; married and unmarried members living in the city accept birth control and some use it. Other members oppose its use. K'inäl offers workshops on women's health which include reproductive health.

Upon reflection, the primary purpose of the Global Partners program was to create positive public relations for International Planned Parenthood's work, hence, the bulk of the project's money stayed in the US and was used for publicity and travel. The need for positive image was related to putting pressure on the US government to fund

PROJECT TITLE: WOMEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO DECIDE ON THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN THEY ARE ABLE TO HAVE AND CARE FOR

PROJECT PARTNERS: Planned Parenthood of Delaware and Otsego Counties, K'in al Antzetik, and Jolom Mayaetik

Projected impact: 250 Indigenous women from Jolom Mayaetik coop
 100 Oxchuc
 500 Northern Zone Tia, Yajalon, Tumbala
 10,000 indirect in communities and families of all participants

OBJECTIVE: For participating women to gain an understanding of their reproductive rights and for them to be able to integrate and apply these rights within the framework of their indigenous culture

Women's Rights (Revolutionary Law for Women 1993)

Women have the right to decide the number of children they can have
 Women and children have the right to primary attention in health and nutrition

Women have the right to education

Women have the right to decide whether or not to marry

No woman should be beaten or mistreated by family or strangers.
 Actions like this are violations and will be severely punished.

Outcomes:

1. Six workshops to reclaim, produce, and edit the oral histories of indigenous women. Themes will include: Infancy and adolescence; our life as women; religion, customs, and ways of the community; sexuality; birth control, abortion, curing of female infirmities; pregnancy, birth and motherhood.
2. Forum with 100 women in small groups on health, reproductive health, and violence (sexual, domestic, and military)
3. Four workshops in four major municipal zones, sixteen workshops total of in depth analysis on the topics of: the body and menstruation; sexual relations and birth control; motherhood and the rights of women; men's questions and women's answers about women's health and bodies
4. Educational pamphlets written in the 4 major Mayan languages and Spanish with many drawings, for use in communities
5. Book on Mayan women's oral histories on phases of women's' lives, health, and healing.

UN reproductive health programs. This goal was met by hosting our partners, holding public receptions, and developing strong media coverage. The north-south solidarity network utilized the two trips that our Chiapas partners took to the US to link with planned speaking—selling tours, thus reducing costs and increasing sales for the co-operative. This also allowed for networking opportunities in the US.

In addition to public relations, there were lessons learned in our partnership at the local level. When our guests first arrived and saw people with placards outside of the Planned Parenthood office and clinic, they thought that people were celebrating the clinic—not protesting it. They were shocked to learn about the anti-choice protests.

When our partners visited our local hospitals, they were struck by their staff and size. Our partners were able to give an in-service presentation to hospital staff on health conditions in Chiapas.

When traveling around the upstate N.Y. countryside, the women learned about US poverty—something that most Mexicans do not believe exists in the USA. After traveling around Delaware County and meeting young, single moms, our guests from Chiapas stated that US women were not poor as they had stoves, refrigerators, electricity, toilets, and heating. This led to an interesting discussion on how poverty and stigmatization played out differently and similarly in both countries. Through these travels, warm personal relations and lots of good will were established and Jolom and K'inál also received some personal gifts of office equipment.

When our delegation went to Chiapas, they were shocked by the lack of basic services like running water, bathrooms, and cooking stoves in the rural areas. They were also impressed by the solidarity of the poor and the organizing expertise of our Chiapas partners.

One conflict that emerged between the BINGO, our local PP, and our Chiapas partners involved a dispute over pricing of small purses that the co-op members were asked to produce for conference favors. All groups were very excited about working with a cooperative that produced hand-made textiles. As usual, I was always carrying around samples and brought some to the representatives from Washington, D.C. who bought a few small items. This led to further discussions about purchasing 1000 bags from the cooperative. In the fall, I had conveyed the Jolom price of \$5 per small, brocaded *bolsa* (purse) to the international organization and Jolom sent out the word to the weavers. During a January 2002 student delegation visit to the cooperative, I saw that many purses were being set aside for the US

organization. After not hearing from the organization for many months, and after seeing so many bags in Chiapas, I got concerned and called and was later told by a national office staff member in D.C. that she had been told that “they could get bags made in Guatemala for \$1.” They had not let anyone know of the decision to buy cheaper items. My initial response was fury—I stated that the point of our relationship was to improve women’s health and that included keeping the women and their families alive in part through fair prices. The goal was not to compete with Guatemala in a race to the bottom.

I immediately reported this conversation to K’in al in Chiapas. This email led to a blistering critique written by Barbara, K’in al advisor who worked closely with Jolom, who said in part, “If you want to have a ‘global partnership’ with an artesan co-op you should in the first place have respect for their lives and their work” (See full text in Appendix 9). Subsequently, our local Planned Parenthood and Global Partner, who did not know of this decision at the national level, called the national office about this outrage and the bags were purchased at the price determined by the cooperative.

Another conflict in worldview that I experienced in the Global Partners project was this health organization’s avoidance of the topic of sterilization abuse and its use of contraceptives like IUD’s that require substantial clinic follow-up particularly in the context of a lack of gynecological care and high rates of cervical cancer. Forced sterilization is part of the historical and contemporary reality in Chiapas (Hartmann 2002) and was mentioned by Jolom and K’in al in their project statement for the partnership.

When the Global Partners team was created, one short-term member of the Chiapas team was a nun who ran a rural clinic in the northern zone of Tumbalá. While she was opposed to all family planning, she had the most experience with health care issues, especially with gynecological, maternity, and obstetric concerns. Sister came to stay with me and visit Oneonta. We programmed talks on Hartwick’s campus and did an in-service presentation for medical staff at Bassett Hospital on poverty, disease, and health conditions affecting indigenous people in her region of Chiapas. The Chiapas team also visited local upstate Planned Parenthood clinics, and visited and talked with some of the rural, poor mothers who were clients. As mentioned previously, the Chiapas team processed what being poor meant in the

US and in Mexico, and the politics of shame, exclusion, and control. They did not consider the poor upstate women that they met poor.

Our Lady of Fatima Clinic Partnership

Given our work together on the Global Partner's grant, in 2000, I asked the members of K'inál to arrange a clinic visit which would help me better understand health conditions in indigenous communities. After a five hour bumpy and curvy trip from San Cristóbal to the Chol-speaking northern zone, I arrived at a rural clinic run by Mayan, Catholic nuns born in that region. The clinic was started in 1985 with a room for consulting and the altruistic services of the nuns and one Italian physician who served there for nine years. In order to establish the clinic, one of the sisters traveled with Bishop Ruiz of San Cristóbal to Washington, D.C. to seek funds from the Catholic Church. A small grant allowed for the purchase of land and construction of a clinic with hospital beds and pharmacy. The clinic provided services for victims of epidemics like cholera as well as for



Figure 27 Kate with Sisters at Our Lady of Fatima Chol Clinic, Tumbalá, Chiapas 2009.
Photographer: Joseph C. Stillman.

the illnesses associated with poverty—malnutrition, dysentery, and TB. While the doctor was there, the clinic provided lab tests. One of the most sought after services was and remains obstetrics.

My stay with the nuns began with a request. The sisters were planning training for 17 *promotoras* or young, female public health outreach workers but they only had two books. My job was to take the 1 × 1 illustrations from the books which depicted the symptoms, causes, cures, and prevention of illness and draw them on large pieces of paper so that the entire group could see the drawings. I objected that I was not an artist but the nun encouraged me to press on. During the next three days, while I drew, she helped me with my Spanish and told me the story of the clinic. In the afternoon, we visited the houses of patients—elders and children alike, and picked up squashes from grateful patients for the next night's dinner. After day one, the sisters asked me at dinner to talk about my philosophy of life, my views of the issues before us, and my life. The next day, I again drew and sister spoke to me. This time, she talked about some of the difficulties they had experienced. She drew a small map of x's on a piece of paper and told me that these were the areas where the paramilitaries had killed people in her community. She identified how many had been murdered. The northern zone had experienced some of the worst paramilitary repression in Chiapas. They knew many of the young men, desperate with poverty, who had been recruited; they had treated them. For years, the nuns and the clinic were subjected to threats and intimidation. Like in Acteal, the many military bases surrounding the town offered no protection.

I also learned of the deep and widespread poverty, lack of work, and the inability of people in the community to pay for medicines. The indigenous people were also suspicious of the government clinic and they trusted the nuns. Since 1995, no doctor had been available and lab tests were no longer done, so fewer patients come. Most of the patients first visit the government health center and then go to the nun's clinic for a second opinion of the diagnosis and for treatment. Patients also go to the clinic because the nuns give medicine for free but most importantly, because the people trust the sisters. They have seen their commitment and work and the sisters know their culture and language.

As part of my tour of the clinic, the sisters showed me the ultrasound machine which they used until it broke; it was a gift from researchers from the US who had been doing work on baby foxes. I

asked about the importance of such a machine for their work. They were quick to point out that they had seen many difficult birth situations and the ultrasound would allow them to assess if there were potential problems. In such cases, the women would be transferred to the hospital in San Cristóbal—at least five hours away in part on dirt roads. If the baby was breech, they could turn it. They are routinely forced to deal with tough birth situations; infants have died, usually due to complications including maternal malnutrition.

During my three day stay, I took notes on the clinic's work and the needs of the community and photo-documented the clinic and its staff. The nuns identified clinic medical foci and produced a list of needed medicines and materials (see Appendix 8). The list reveals the scope of the basic community health services that the clinic is providing in addition to their role as the chief maternity clinic in the county (*municipio*). The major health conditions that the nuns must treat are infections, parasites, lacerations from agricultural work like cutting coffee, and bronchial pneumonia.

When I returned to the states, later that spring, I was asked to give a talk on upstate, rural poverty at a small church outside Binghamton, New York. In talking with the parish priest, I learned that he had spent considerable time working in Latin America. We talked about our mutual interests and I told him of the clinic in Chiapas. He suggested I talk with Sister Mary at Lourdes's Hospital in Binghamton about US Catholic agencies devoted to funding health programs in the global south. I pursued this lead and over lunch with the sister, shared my photos of the Chiapas clinic and the list of medical problems and clinic needs. Sister Mary referred me to a foundation in California which accepted grant requests. I downloaded the grant proposal form and forwarded it to K'inal.

Over the next two years, K'inal, the nuns, and I worked diligently to prepare the request, get it translated, and successfully nail down funding. One of the most difficult questions for the nuns to answer related to how they would sustain their work without additional funding? The answer was brutally simple—having created and maintained the clinic through their labor, accepting payment in any form, and growing their own food, the nuns had become self-sufficient in the basics; medicines, repairs, and equipment failures were the out-of-pocket costs that they could not cover. The answer was simply that they would continue to do whatever was necessary to make ends meet as they had successfully been doing for the last 25 years. The

proposal for training additional health promoters, surgical consultations with physicians, community health education, additional training for the sisters, and basic supplies was funded after the initial fax form was lost by the organization and resubmitted; with several calls and a new fax, the substantial grant finally came through in 2003.

Since 2000, K'inal and I have linked the nuns' work in the clinic to the study of indigenous health issues for my delegations from the US in 2002, 2005, and 2009. Staying at the clinic, visiting their patients in the community, and learning from their stories is invaluable and creates some revenue for the clinic as well. I continue to work with local hospitals and doctors for medicines for the clinic and for the still-missing ultrasound, and a sterilization machine for medical instruments. The clinic also still lacks a doctor.

I hope that in discussing frameworks and practices that foreground sustaining the communities and people with whom we work, that we can forge intercultural relations and programs rooted in creating equity and solidarity. I have utilized the case of Chiapas to outline challenges to security and the strategies developed by two grassroots women's organizations and their global allies, to address these threats. Forming long term successful and sustainable relationships north and south, tempering large BINGO's ideology/power to hear the voices of indigenous women, mobilizing economic resources to facilitate getting funds to women in the global south and their families, supporting and developing solidarity efforts in the north, cultivating leaders/advocates north and south, recognizing self determination as a human right, and identifying alternative trade and human rights mechanisms to challenge the deleterious effects of neoliberal development have been identified as key challenges. Women's organizations, and particularly north-south alliances, have a critical role to play in imagining and making security a reality for us all. What forms these relationships will take—the degree of civil society organizational autonomy in brokering such relationships, the scope of northern NGO involvement, and indigenous women's autonomy—are currently being debated in the north and south alike.



Figure 28 Celerina Ruiz Núñez, President of Jolom Mayaetik, at the International Folk Art Market, Santa Fe, New Mexico 2007. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

CHAPTER EIGHT

BUILDING INTERCULTURAL BRIDGES—RETHINKING ACADEMIC PRACTICE

Community-based service learning in international contexts exposes students to communities that differ from their own by race, age, class, culture, and life experiences. As Schultz (1990) suggests:

Our experiences also shape our moral feelings and intuitions. Growing up in a white, middle-class neighborhood may make it very difficult for us to empathize with the pain, desolation, difficulties of minorities or the poor... Being immersed in a minority culture, becoming a minority in another culture may help us to better understand and empathize with the situation of the person whom our society regularly degrades and dehumanizes. Such experiences may awaken new moral feelings in us and so offer us new moral possibilities.

I would add, particularly in the case of international work, such work also challenges faculty and students to the core. Programs with community-based service learning components, especially those that have activist training and expectations of solidarity work, involve levels of risk and commitment at personal and institutional levels which go well beyond traditional courses. The programs outlined below, share long-term commitments to people and communities, structured reflection on ethical and intellectual issues, and respect for diverse cultures. The programs seek local community input on defining needs and match community-identified needs with student skills. In all, the goal is to create a learning experience from which students learn through activism but one that does not privilege their learning at the expense of community members. These changes reflect the impact of solidarity ethics on academic practice.

Students, faculty, and academic institutions leave with the expectation to continue their commitments to economic solidarity across contexts. Realizing the depth and intensity of such commitments, particularly when it involves challenging our own privilege can be intimidating and inspiring. The malefic generosity (Turpin 2008) that often stems from dominance, can translate into the desire to 'do something' or 'help' rather than listen, learn, and do what is necessary from the

perspective of partners. Understanding that work in Chiapas is also training for the serious work that needs to take place in the US can be disconcerting. The following section traces the evolution of my academic practice in Mexico from academic course with service learning to delegations and solidarity—a relationship still under construction.

In 1996, Hartwick College faculty members were invited to submit applications for participation in an innovative curriculum development project in global education. The focus was intercultural, international immersion programs for first year students. The program's goal was to enhance first year students' effectiveness as learners in an increasingly complicated, interrelated, multicultural world. Ultimately, through dialogue with one another, and through sharing years of intercultural and disciplinary work, the faculty chosen developed shared models for intercultural study programs. Implicit in this approach was the assumption, that if first year students were exposed to challenging, cross-cultural programming early on as they passed through subsequent courses and majors, they would bring a deeper and more personal understanding and knowledge of cross-cultural matters to the entire campus resulting potentially in a more progressive and informed campus climate.

After meeting for nearly a year and sharing information and views on learning, assessment, course structure, teaching methodology and group dynamics, my course on Chiapas, Mexico, and my colleagues' course on Germany/France—both taught during January term abroad—became the initial models generated. The next year, programs to Thailand, South Africa, and Jamaica were created. Throughout the 1996–1999 years, we debated and analyzed our models from inception to completion.

The Issue of Service in the Intercultural Context

Of the five first year models generated, several had service learning components including mine in Chiapas. This decision on my part was based on sixteen years of community organizing and activism and ten years of work in service learning and incorporation of this methodology into discipline-based courses including Women and Social Change, Contemporary Theory, Children's Lives, and Introduction to Women's Studies and an interdisciplinary January term that I chaired entitled Vision, Action, and Community. I linked this foray into ser-



Figure 29 Hartwick College student delegation and members of the board of directors of Jolom Mayaetik have a meeting and lunch with co-op members in the community of Bautista Chico, Chiapas, Mexico 2005. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

vice in an international context to a first year seminar that I was teaching at the time, *Children's Lives*, and to contacts that I had made in San Cristóbal, Chiapas, during two initial preparation visits.

My choice of Chiapas as a site also grew out of ten years of activist and ethnographic work with the rural poor in the upstate region of New York State. I had been working principally with women and children who were the families of dairy farm workers. Chiapas offered me the chance to analyze the gender, class, and ethnic dimensions of structural inequality, social movement organizing, public policy, and social change comparatively.

Hartwick College also had an exchange relationship with UNACH-National Mexican University of Social Sciences in San Cristóbal de las Casas. I found a university base promising.

Introducing a service component to my course meant that I had additional concerns to consider. As outlined in the *Wingspread Report* (Honnet and Poulsen 1989), effective service learning entails the following:

1. Engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good
2. Incorporates critical reflection in course design
3. Articulates clear service and learning goals
4. Allows communities to define needs
5. Expects genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment
6. Includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition and evaluation to meet service and learning goals.

Given the challenging situation in Chiapas and an inaugural first year Hartwick course with students in Mexico during January, 1998, I delimited the scope of our community work to action which would be safe, requested by local organizations, and which matched my research and activism experience and training, and my students' career and major interests. A focus on poverty with special emphases on women's and children's education and health emerged as service foci.

"Tradition, Continuity, and Struggle in Chiapas, Mexico" First Year Seminar

While the faculty engaged in the Henry Luce Foundation seminar favored a full fall preparation course, coupled with a January four week term abroad, and spring reflection sessions, institutional constraints produced a schedule of seven weeks fall on-campus preparation, four weeks at an international site during January term, and seven weeks of spring reflection on campus. Faculty members had varied in their approaches to structuring the preparation course. Some opted for more attention to group process and group formation, modest language preparation, and fewer readings; others weighted the course more heavily toward academic preparation. I gravitated toward the latter.

My preparation for the course entailed extensive reading in Mexican and Mayan culture, history, sociology, and politics. I made two initial trips to Mexico to establish ties with the community and university, and to make contacts with important civil society organizations. Upon my return, constant email communication with these contacts was critical for setting up lectures, housing, cultural programming, transportation, and service opportunities. In addition, during this phase, I began Spanish language study.

As outlined in my course syllabus, the course's learning goals included acquainting first year students with the cultural traditions of the Mayan people within historical and contemporary contexts. Contemporary political, economic, and social issues would be examined in relation to Mexican and US societies. The service component was designed to link the academic literature to real life experiences and to raise awareness regarding comparative gender, class, ethnic, and global north-south inequality.

I chose to develop a structured academic syllabus containing classic texts in Mayan studies, readings on selected topics of poverty, health, women's and particularly Guatemalan refugee issues as we would visit refugee villages. Ethnographies on the Lacandon Maya and the Guatemalan conflict were also chosen on the basis of planned visits to these areas. I also wanted to give students an overview text that would link Mexican history with the current Zapatista movement. Several chapters on observation and ethnographic field notes were also assigned. Classes met for seven weeks for a three hour session. I used ethnographic and documentary films extensively to stimulate discussion and to make readings more tangible. Most students had some Spanish language competency; this was augmented through work with a Spanish instructor at the college.

In addition to academic and language training, the class participated in a skill-based "challenge" day—an intensive, experiential, team building workshop in the snow at our campus lakeside facility. In preparing for this workshop, I had spoken to the trainers about issues that we would be confronting in Chiapas including communication difficulties, keeping the group together, tight transportation situations, and other health and safety issues—including that of my 10 year old son who would accompany us. At lunch, I spoke with students explicitly about sexual, political, health, and safety issues. I also directly addressed drug usage and Mexican government laws. As part of this program, students and I constructed a contract for group behavior, one which I was forced to drag out several times subsequently while in Mexico. This day long workshop was designed to put us through the paces of learning to work together, make co-operative decisions, communicate effectively with each other, and respect one another's needs all in the context of other cultures and languages. At the end of the day, as a group we decided that we would need the following components to make the course in Chiapas work:

Flexibility, tolerance, respect, honesty, trust, communication—both speaking up and compromising and listening, cooperation, organization, open mindedness, patience, group awareness, support, safe fun, sense of humor, respect for other's opinions, team work, self control, balance, time for stress relief, relaxation, and debriefing.

All but two of the students attended that workshop and signed the group contract. That document was carried in a plastic, waterproof pouch throughout the trip and became the reference point for numerous problematic situations.

Service at this stage was of two types. Fundraising activities were conducted in my Children's Lives class for use in Mexico. Students in the Chiapas course also did fundraising over the holidays and solicited medical and school supplies largely via family networks for distribution in refugee camps in Mexico with whom we would have contact. Both contact organizations had specified the sort of materials that they needed most.

While in Mexico, guest lectures linked texts that we had used and issues that we would encounter in the field. Service was arranged in conjunction with the cultural center where we were housed and a NGO for refugees with whom I had made contact during the previous summer. Students worked with street kids in an after school art program for several days. When visiting refugee camps on the Mexican border with Guatemala, students were able to deliver the medical and school supplies that they had acquired during the term and over the holiday break.

Reflection

Academic reflection was built into the fall preparation via reflection essays connecting ethnography with students' personal lives. During January term, reflection took various forms including ethnographic journals, site expert reports prepared at home and delivered on site, final research papers completed several weeks after our return, as well as frequent group reflection sessions in our hotel rooms. After returning from several days of visits to remote, Guatemalan refugee border camps, during a sometimes teary and heated session, some students complained of feeling useless merely observing and listening at the camps. They wanted to "do something." At such junctures, it became important to remind students that in contexts like Chiapas, it was pos-

sible to do more harm than good without the proper contacts and clearances. We were also confronting our privilege and our locations in the global economic system. This brought us back to pre-departure discussions of the politics of talk and actions, alliances and allegiances, and long-standing land disputes, racism, and ethnic conflicts in Chiapas and Guatemala as well as US policies.

One pre-med major's journal entry embodies her heightened sense of frustration:

There is no leisure time for the people in these camps. If they don't work, they don't eat, and even if they do work, that doesn't mean that there will ever be sufficient food on their tables. They told us that the conditions in Mexico are good and that they were fighting to stay here. It blows my mind, what kind of conditions were they living in while in Guatemala? (Student journal, 1998)

After our return to the states, we had eight weeks of reflection classes, beginning with one where we shared our pictures and talked about their importance to us. Eventually, the class culminated in the students preparing a slide show discussion of their work in Chiapas and presenting it publicly.

At the conclusion of the Henry Luce experimentation, the faculty involved concurred that the best model for such experiences would include a full semester course of academic preparation and that they could use some help with mentoring and debriefing first year students. Faculty also asked for any possible additional information on students' prior behavioral patterns and health issues as well as increased institutional support for course development and faculty time commitment. We requested faculty training workshops.

In the following year, I repeated the course with students from Hartwick and SUNY Oneonta, a colleague from SUNY, and mostly upper level anthropology and sociology majors. On the basis of the previous year's course, and in conjunction with the experiences of other colleagues in the Luce Program, I made the following changes.

I developed and required a full semester preparation course in Sociology (See course in Appendix 5), added a text on field methods, and required a group field observation exercise at a local community meals site in order for students to grapple with feelings of being outsiders. I also required written and oral presentations/reflections on readings and connections to students' lives (called making connections papers) and had students do internet fact finding and a bibliography.

I incorporated service in teams in the fall course. Students chose to do fundraising for school and medical supplies in a number of different ways. I assigned group written and oral reports linking service in Oneonta to issues in Chiapas. All of the above components received fall grades.

In terms of dealing with issues where students had taken inordinate risks, I created more frequent reflection sessions, dealt with problem situations and resultant anger and frustration immediately, worked with the cultural center programmer to avoid certain sites, and asked the Director of International Programs to even more explicitly address safety issues. The next year, he issued faculty cell phone information for emergency use. I utilized this feature in the first week.

In Mexico, service was more extensive but still linked to the organizations with which I had personal contacts. Through our cultural center organization, we worked in the Lacandon Jungle in the village of Naha. We cleared *milpas* with widows, cleaned a school area and dug drainage ditches, and brought medical supplies to the local clinic. In subsequent discussions with our organizational contact and teachers at the school, we decided to use some of the money that was raised in fall activities to purchase school materials, sporting supplies, and tools for the village residents.

Following this semester in Chiapas, I again felt the tremendous weight of responsibility that came with overseeing a group of students in an off-campus context. More than ever, I knew that having two faculty members was a bottom line necessity. Often, one faculty member had to do banking while another arranged transportation. There were also those moments when it took two heads to sort out the best plan of action in difficult circumstances, like negotiating military checkpoints. Finally, I needed another person for emotional support, debriefing, laughing, and maintaining my energy.

When reflecting on our trip into the Lacandon and our encounters with scores of military men, a large group of gawking, staring, village men, and lots of mud which bogged down one of our vans, I tried to capture in poetry our group's fears, our attempts to communicate, and our reactions to these intense situations based on our own past experiences. Reactions ranged from withdrawal to anger, and as a faculty member, I had to negotiate these emotions. Fortunately, our fears did not become reality.

"Rumba en la Ruta-Part II"

On a road so small that even the maps missed it
 our next roadside attraction walked toward us in packs of picks.
 Snow Whites with devilish dwarfs
 or babes spread on *selva* beds?
 Their faces pressed against the windows.
 Fingers fidget to find a Swiss Army cache.
 Four gringás chart their own paths
 into this unknown.
 One chatters sweetly.
 One curls fetal.
 One counsels
 and fear turns to strategy.
 "I've been raped before so I'll go first
 I know what it's like
 You run."
 Silence.
 "We go down together."
 "Get your knives ready."
 "I'm not goin' down without a fight."
 FRIGHT FIGHT FLIGHT
 no longer *lodo*(mud)-laden but mired in memory.

Hartwick College Transcultural Nursing in Jamaica

Third year nursing students at Hartwick College have the option of studying nursing in a Jamaican context. Having completed two years of training, 3rd year students are at the skill level to provide wellness services in a community setting. Before embarking on the off-campus component of their work, nursing majors are expected to attend a series of meetings which discuss Jamaican culture, customs, diet, history, and healthcare. Practical issues like packing, eating arrangements, and travel plans as well as safety and health issues are also discussed.

Academic preparation includes reading both scholarly articles and popular literature. Formal and informal orientation begins immediately upon arrival in Jamaica when students are placed for two days in urban community-based care sites. This initial healthcare field placement is accompanied by guest lectures by people living and working within the Jamaican culture and healthcare system. Lectures focus on Jamaican healthcare issues.

Following this orientation, students move to rural settings for several weeks. In this setting, students work closely with Senior Health Nurses and provide hands-on care in homes and health clinics. Clinical experiences include: well-child, prenatal, dental, family planning, immunization, nutrition, and wound care clinics. Students also participated in home health care, day care, local schools, and orphanage visits.

The course is designed to help students provide culturally competent care to individuals and communities. Throughout, emphasis is placed on students learning as much as possible about Jamaican culture and working in relationships based on mutual exchange (Havener and Dettenrieder 1999).

Because faculty were conscious of the outsider, global north status of the students, they did not wish to reproduce an attitude where students saw themselves acting upon a population in a laboratory. Rather, the faculty drew on their established relationships in the community, and local professional and community resources, specifically, the Department of Advanced Nursing Education at the University of the West Indies campus, to create a culturally-sensitive structure rooted in community-based nursing. In order to make this possible, "bridges needed to be created and maintained from the neighborhood to academia" (Havener and Dettenrieder 1999:11). The result was relations of mutual respect between the nursing students, the Jamaican health-care professionals, and Hartwick faculty which helped students understand the realities of healthcare in the developing nation of Jamaica, and the "incongruities that exist between folk and professional health care systems" (Havener and Dettenrieder 1999:20).

During the course of the work in Jamaica, students engaged in daily post-conferences. Here they were given the opportunity to deal with feelings, frustrations, and problem-solving. Agency staff and local residents were also encouraged to give feedback to the students. Professional feedback came from agency preceptors, Senior Public Health Nurses, and the Hartwick faculty. Student effectiveness was measured in case study presentations, teaching projects, and journals.

In summarizing what makes such a program possible, the program directors underscore the importance of faculty who share fundamental philosophies and practices. Faculty need to work as a team and be able to take over for one another in a number of contexts. Similarly, faculty teams need each other for mutual support, emotional and intellectual.

Finally, such a program requires personnel willing to take risks and willing to be on call, 24–7, that is, 24 hours a day seven days a week.

Both in Chiapas and Jamaica, faculty members had to confront student interpersonal and sexual behaviors which at best could be misinterpreted and lead to difficulties and, at worst, could result in violence or rape. In the case of Chiapas, I had a student who used his native Spanish ability and sport star aura to pick up young girls. The sight of these young girls hanging around the hotel lobby waiting for him led to a frank revisiting of ethics, Mexican vs. US norms for dating and sex and potential consequences. Again, using poetry as a way to process my concerns and intense emotions, I wrote the following piece about one of the female student's behavior in Chiapas during the 1998 course.

The Night is Male in Comitán

The night is male in Comitán
 searchlight eyes rove
 the *zócalo*(town plaza)
 spotting giggling *gringas*
 sauntering sirens
 loud laughter
 too much skin.
 smiling, pointing at his bulging arsenal
 "How do you say 'that' in Tzotzil?"

The achievement of "cultural competence," or the experientially-based cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills which emerge through cross cultural interaction is an overarching goal of the Jamaica program; the Chiapas program is seeking a more political understanding and relationship. Both programs recognize the cognitive, emotional, and interpersonal dimensions of this process and attempt to prepare students for being highly visible outsiders, perhaps for the first time in their lives.

Nursing students at Hartwick begin this process of self-consciously locating themselves within various communities in their first year studies. They also acquire nursing-based skills for several years before being asked to apply them in the Jamaican context. Finally, many nursing students know each other as peers in the same cohort and have established student networks. Nursing students, therefore, have the possibility of maximizing their learning, contributing more effectively to the specific service site for which they have been trained, and

growing from the exposure to new and different health care situations and health problems. The more that student skills can be matched to community needs, the better the experience for community agencies, students, and faculty alike. Student motivation, learning, and behavior can all be positively affected by matching needs to skills. While many of us do not have the luxury of recruiting within a major, focusing on skill development linked to community needs, mentoring, and training will strengthen programs.

Both programs also emphasize critical reflection and build it into all phases of the curriculum. I personally favor a required, formal course with graded projects, discussion, films, speakers, readings, evaluation, and group dynamics projects as a prerequisite for intercultural study. In the Luce Project discussions, faculty noted that some students perceived intercultural work as travel, rather than as coursework, a perception that undermines academic and behavioral standards. Post-immersion reflection is also very critical and can take many forms. I have found that a student public presentation utilizing power point or slide shows, re-groups the students and allows them to put their learning into academic and emotional perspective. I have also found student research papers, completed several weeks after the students return from the off-campus experience, powerful learning devices.

Finally, each program connected the service initiatives to the course's learning objectives and to community needs. In order to do this effectively and responsibly, faculty had to establish strong community ties, and even licensing in the case of the nursing program, in order to make this work. The nursing program's affiliation with the staff in the Department of Advanced Nursing at the University of the West Indies and use of the Isaac Barrant Comprehensive Clinic as a main clinic training base were critical to the success of the program. Such relations promoted student professionalism, staff mentoring, and community-level feedback on both student practice and behavior. Because students graduate, it remains the responsibility of the faculty to ensure that community contact and concern are sustained. Whether the college would be willing to sustain such commitments and how they might do so when faculty retire or leave is a question that will be addressed in the next section.

Through my participation in the Luce Project and in many conversations with faculty engaged in intercultural program development, the following issues remain problematic. In choosing the appropriate stu-

dents for such a program, faculty might need institutional assistance in assessing student emotional capacity for such programs. Institutions also need to evaluate if faculty can work effectively as teams. Finally, faculty need orientation, training, and time to develop such programs. In order to create programs with integrity, institutional resources must be forthcoming.

Moving Toward Solidarity

Since developing the Hartwick College first year immersion program of 1998 and the Hartwick and SUNY Oneonta program of 1999, both with service learning components, the nature of the course in Chiapas has shifted to reflect my deepening commitment to solidarity. Such a commitment has entailed learning first hand from our partners about their processes and philosophies—accompaniment, collectivism, and resistance. Our alignment with the resources and practices of our sister organizations has also meant that in 2002 and again in 2005, we worked with Jolom and K'inol on building projects. In 2002, we worked with indigenous people from three villages to build a small weaving center in the mountains. I returned later in the summer to help paint the structure. Unfortunately, after the completion and blessing of the building, due to conflict between Jolom and the local council in the autonomous region, it was never allowed to open and was ordered to be torn down or else it would be burned.

In 2005 and 2009, the Hartwick student delegation visited with six communities and in each site spoke with Jolom Mayaetik members and representatives about issues confronting them. Our discussions ranged from patriarchal control as manifested in arranged marriages, domestic violence, and women's resistance; family planning, conflict resolution, lack of potable water, washing, and toilet facilities, lack of dependable healthcare, women's extremely long and hard work days, severe economic hardship and poverty, declining price of coffee, rising costs, the need for women's increased weaving work, the benefits of membership in the co-op, and the women's participation in civil society resistance to the privatization of electricity. In each community, we made a financial contribution for the time and expertise of the members with whom we met. We also met with other civil society groups engaged in organizing against continuing government repression, land conflicts, privatization, and male domination within indigenous and

Zapatista organizations. In 2005, part of our time was spent physically working at the new center for training where we worked with volunteers from New York and California to put in an organic garden with walkways and arbors. We returned to garden work briefly in 2009 but the course's emphasis was on students learning about civil society social justice work from community activists in Chiapas with the goal of bringing this organizing experience back to the US.

At the same time that delegations were replacing courses, work in the north took on popular education forms and also moved from campus to community. In 2001, I worked with students to create our first Anti-Sweatshop Fashion Show based on Maquila Solidarity Network's model. This proved to be a great way to involve students in a variety of roles from researchers, to models, and djs-all to make the link between student consumption patterns, clothing produced in sweatshops, and the fair trade, anti-sweat alternatives. This type of educational program has continued and has become a yearly event often around March 8th, International Women's Day.

In 2002, I developed Salsa and Solidarity-Fiesta of Peace designed to link the work of indigenous women's rights, economic justice, the Fair Trade work of Jolom Mayaetik, and the Pastors for Peace Caravan to Chiapas. Subsequently, the Jolom story became part of a public tour called "Women Confronting Globalization." These coast-to coast and Canadian tours involve members of Jolom and K'inál linking with solidarity network people who organize and host meetings with churches, schools, weavers, community centers, citizen groups, and colleges across the US to discuss the effects of globalization, co-op development, indigenous rights, trade policy, and Mayan weaving. Finally, workshops, talks, and popular education have also become part of our presentations and sales at the Society for Applied Anthropology Annual Conference since 2001 and at the American Anthropology Conference in 2005, 2006, and 2008.

In 2007, Hartwick once again hosted Salsa and Solidarity and I used the occasion to propose a chapter of the Weaving Solidarity Network on Hartwick's campus. I linked its work to my course on Global Feminisms, a student community action team project and spring internship, and the Hartwick Center for Interdependence. An institutional site has the potential to extend the economic solidarity work beyond me and the members of occasional off-campus classes and invites participation from staff, faculty, students, and local Oneonta community members.

It's More than Academic

On a long drive between Vancouver and Seattle, Kara, a US student who traveled with my group in 2005 and with whom I worked on Jolom tours in the US, and I talked about the organizing challenges before the network and us in particular—challenges that are academic, cultural, and socio-economic. Over dinner, she reported, “feeling frustrated with the difficulty of translating all that she had participated in and the ways she had learned and changed by working with committed community activists into an academic structured outline that showed the effectiveness of her project” (personal note). Marla a long term activist in Chiapas responded,

that all of the projects and initiatives that have been implemented in Chiapas are from the ideals and hopes of people who live there and want to make positive change in the world. They are ways to take control of their life and live in a way that is inspiring. They implement them because the people in Chiapas are living on those dreams and that is what has carried them this far. They are living on hope and the stubbornness that they won't give up.

Kara came to “a humbling realization that after spending three years in a college environment where the effectiveness of action is recorded, calculated, and theorized instead of implemented” her work with Jolom and K'inál made her appreciate commitment and action. Kara came to understand that

the real ingredients for social change are commitment, idealism, hope, and bitter stubbornness including the personal changes that take place from participating in hopes of changing the world for the better. This was a new perspective that I think I always knew in my heart but had not been affirmed with credibility or recognition (personal note).

I agree with Kara that the academy is ivory tower and unreal most of the time—hence my work on economic solidarity, community based work, and also one of the reasons for sharing my thoughts in this book. Our egos and lives of privilege insulate us from the basic struggles of people—here and in Chiapas. Realizing our accountability to others through committed, long term solidarity relations and coalitions is one way to reconnect the alienated lives we live, give us hope, and challenge injustice.

As Kara wrote to me,

To me real education is waking people up and making them feel alive. Showing them not through graphs and statistics but through action and inspiration that another world is possible. I believe if we want to help the next generation think in a more sustainable way we need to rethink our ideas of education. For me this type of experiential learning is so important. Through action oriented learning you are able to experience the abstract ideals of our world as well as the ways you can create change within it (personal note).

Weaving Solidarity from Oneonta to Oxchuc

From Oneonta to Oxchuc, I have been working with people to address community concerns across the multiple borders of generation, class, culture, and global north and south. I see the central challenge of academics as learning to work cooperatively to construct just, collective responses to the structural problems we all face—using the tools of our trade to facilitate this work. This is the work of public sociology. Making linkages between theory and practice has been the core of my academic work for nearly three decades.

When I began this work as a junior faculty member, I was part of a department that respected individual autonomy, and the tenure committee at Hartwick had a Boyer-based, broad sense of what constituted “scholarly” work. I was lucky. For most young faculty and most institutions, it remains risky to undertake actions like these. Later on, serving as chair of Sociology for fifteen years and as coordinator of the Women’s Studies program for nine years gave me lots of creative, departmental curricular power. This did not, however, often translate into institutional power regarding the construction of a college community partners program.

For me, participatory democracy has meant empowering people and linking campus and community via organizing, programs, curriculum, and local, national, and global projects. We are using our experiences, cross-cultural knowledge, and scholarly frameworks and research to inform our work and analysis and to critically reflect on that same work in the hope of forging community and social justice.

Substantial challenges in the community-based work that I have undertaken include recognizing how power plays out in various settings. For students, challenges include gaining voice, working collaboratively in groups, collectively organizing and challenging in a systematic rather than haphazard way, using research to inform actions, working

with the community members and respecting their knowledge and expertise, learning not to expect immediate results, thinking of their work as cumulative, realizing that their academic or personal needs do not always come first, learning to negotiate, compromise, challenge, and lobby, and, most importantly, learning not to give up.

For over twenty years I have used a strategy for community-based work and research in the US-academic courses with activist curricula to structure student involvement—but such courses alone do not cultivate a commitment to “the long haul.” The question of cultivating long term, committed relationships with undergrad students is vexing but we have to begin the process.

Academic institutions must work to be inclusive and move beyond their often gated culture. The academy can be instrumental in forging new relationships but must honor diverse leaders, history, and structural challenges. Committing to the institutional heavy lifting of building genuine partnerships remains a challenge, although successful models exist (Mattingly and Hansen 2006).

With respect to Jolom and the WSN, the most difficult task remains developing enduring student, institutional, and community commitment. For the academy and community, class interests and power inequities translate into agendas and priorities—thus the transnational solidarity relation is particularly daunting. Potential mechanisms to institutionalize relations include Memoranda of Mutual Understanding, partnerships, centers, institutes, 501C non-profits, coalitions, social movements, and joint socio-economic projects.

In conclusion, there are important lessons to be learned at every level by undertaking transnational community-based work-lessons that include disciplinary specifics, but which extend far beyond to life, social justice, and the practice of democracy.

In the next chapter, I discuss our network’s challenges and possible mobilization issues for other informal solidarity organizations and explore how we might organize for greater efficacy, sustainability, and solidarity.



Figure 30 Rosalinda at the Jolom Mayaetik AAA exhibition, Washington, D.C. 2005.
Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION—TYING UP LOOSE THREADS (BEADS ON A ROSARY)

Change means growth, and growth can be painful. But we sharpen self-definition by exposing the self in work and struggle together with those whom we define as different from ourselves, although sharing the same goals. (Audre Lorde 1984: 123)

A solidarity network's capacity to be successful is based on external and internal factors. As has been discussed, at the macro level, major events in Chiapas like the Zapatista rebellion in 1994 and the Acteal Massacre of 1997 and outcry over pervasive human rights abuses throughout the period have attracted national and international activists to work in solidarity projects in Chiapas. Some of these activists found their way to K'inál Antzetik and Jolom Mayaetik. In general, activists have been recruited through personal relationships and affinity for the Jolom story.

After the 2003 Jolom troubles with autonomous zone authorities, and the subsequent end of tours and marketing through Mexico Solidarity in the US, five or six years ago I raised the issue of creating a US-based sister organization; Barbara dissuaded me from doing so. This might have been related to the protracted external struggle and subsequent internal tension that Jolom had just experienced. I respected Barbara's counsel and realized that any organizing would be a sensitive issue. Instead, I began to pursue larger and consistent US economic markets for Jolom's textiles to help insure that the women would be paid on a routine basis and in less time. As recently as January, 2009, Jolom members directly continue to request more markets for their weavings as they do not have enough money to buy corn or other necessary items (Field notes 2009).

Our work at the SFAA conference and the International Folk Art Market are outgrowths of this analysis. While these are necessary steps, they are not sufficient in terms of solidarity and sustainability. In part, this has to do with the changing nature of transnational movements and their organizing and our network's need to adapt to these realities.



Figure 31 FNLS Banner International Women's Day on the grounds of the Center for Training and Education, San Cristóbal, Chiapas, Mexico 2007. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

After our 2007 analysis conference in Chiapas, I committed to linking electronically with other key members of the US solidarity network. I also visited with members of *El Camino* in France. In my email to US Jolom solidarity people, I asked them if they wanted to link more consistently and create a formal US solidarity organization. The concern over communication was raised by many of the people at our Chiapas meeting. One person responded that she felt that we needed to work independently but link more strategically to groups like the Ruckus Society and hip hop youth organizations. Another member said she had no interest in creating a bureaucracy. Another member volunteered to develop museum exhibits; this did not happen. I did not hear from others. A year later in 2008, I once again emailed the list to ask about organizing options. Again, I did not receive feedback. I then turned to my college and submitted a proposal for the creation of a Weaving Solidarity Network. I got no institutional response other than concern over doing anything with sales and linking that to the college. I did launch the Weaving Solidarity Network on Myspace and Facebook.

While I recognize the individuality and diversity of the solidarity network, having a totally decentralized inventory, marketing, communication, education, and distribution system does not serve Jolom or the goal of economic solidarity well. This realization has pushed me to pursue alternative organizing structures informed by contemporary trends and personal energies.

Jackie Smith (2006) uses the metaphor of the rhizome to describe the less concrete but connected nature of contemporary global social change activism. Smith (2006) argues that social movements are becoming increasingly internationalized and composed of more loose, informal networks, transnational NGO organizations, and citizen actions—many originating in the global south.

As has been discussed throughout the book, our work in Chiapas is such a case. While Smith (2006) argues that the informal movement aspect of mobilization might be the most dynamic and important dimension of current global change (Smith 2006: 113), the deep, interconnected, and multi power scale (Blackwell in Speed et al. 2006) organizing on the ground by indigenous women and their allies in Chiapas reveals a high level of conscious action and coordination in order to counter structural obstacles at every level-cultural, local, national, and international as well as race, class, and gender exclusion.

To rise to the level of concrete action that a solidarity commitment demands involves more discipline, communication, coordination, and structure for joint decision-making than our informal network has had to date. This will require adding activist networks and affinity groups to our already existing friendship networks. It will also mean that in addition to programming through formal but non-movement organizations (churches, professional associations, delegations), systematizing outreach to social movement allies and transnational coalitions who translate neoliberal trade and development agendas into critical popular education and concrete action in their networks will assist with sales, political action, and networking. This is a vital concern for our Chiapas counterparts as well as ourselves; our friends in Chiapas have been doing this for decades.

Again, as mentioned previously, individual members in our network and our organizational counterparts in Chiapas have direct ties to such allies like Madre, The Global Fund for Women, and international social movements and entities but we do not have a unified organizational presence in order to inform, plan, lobby, educate, network, and fundraise. Jolom's textiles give us the opportunity to link

personally with a wide public and discuss the tangible impact of neoliberalism and alternatives to it.

In sum, our challenge is to match our Chiapas colleagues' organizing to our context, and meet the efficacy target of the solidarity relationship. If our goal is to reduce poverty and strengthen women, and the members of Jolom have chosen their weaving as the vehicle to do that at this time, then joining with political and educational networks and movements focused on economic and social justice and human rights in a formal manner is required. An early step is formalizing our network and making it more visible in the US.

Creating an Organizational Identity for the US Solidarity Network

In terms of organizing, we have been operating in a radically decentralized manner akin to what Starhawk (2002) describes as working or affinity groups or what I refer to as beads on a rosary (Tarrow 2005 refers to relational diffusion). The Hail Mary's at each bead have worked for a long time but for the US solidarity network all of the logistical energy in the past flowed primarily through Barbara—the organizer, calendar, translator, grant writer, single English-speaking person at the time in Jolom and K'injal in Chiapas for many years. Over time, this became quite complicated; planning and communication, which were amazingly good, were contingent on her scarce time and availability. Most all of us became involved by going to Chiapas personally—not by talking with one another in the US. Barbara's May, 2007 return to her native country, Germany, made the fragility of this situation apparent and a discussion of organizing strategy more urgent. Sarah and then Marla replaced Barbara but that did not correct the organizational weakness in the US.

In the US, individual people choose to set up events and market textiles to stores and organizations but without coordination. Although Kara developed a webpage for Jolom in 2005, and people had access it in English, Spanish, or French, its links were all through Chiapas and there was no contact information for the US solidarity network. It is now defunct and a new Chiapas-based page has been constructed.

Utilizing the solidarity relationship process that I outlined earlier, we might begin by thinking about how people align themselves with the network. What insights can our partners in Chiapas give us for our mobilization work? Key internal organizational factors include US formal structure, identity, visibility, and communication.

Formalizing the Weaving Solidarity Network

To develop a greater sense of shared purpose like Jolom has, telling the amazing Jolom story of indigenous women creating a cooperative with a participatory democratic leadership structure, autonomous control over power and finance, and transnational alliance building is powerful. It is also important to frame the sale of textiles in terms of human rights and continue to speak of the intersection of race, class, and gender in social, economic, cultural, and political rights. Social justice is the shared purpose and the major frame for textile sales. This purpose is reflected on Jolom's textile tags but all of the information is currently in Spanish; US information materials and tags need to be in English as well. In the US, the label of Fair Trade is intended to foreground a rights approach but it often does so as a gloss. "Conscious consuming" alone will not change international financial institutions' policies and trade agreements but it is a step-one that Jolom has asked us to take with them. Finally, it is also important to frame the textiles aesthetically in terms of the fine art of traditional backstrap loom weaving, Mayan cultural heritage, and artistic innovation through design collaborations.

We can foster accompaniment through autonomous, locally-based solidarity groups where people have tie in, access, education, and support. Local chapters can also house information on Jolom and K'inál and do consciousness-raising about the intersection of rights. Such groups may host Jolom tours as well as social and educational gatherings in the community, reinforce the collective values we share, build community, and link to local and regional social justice movements. This pattern currently exists at a largely individual solidarity activist level with occasional tours and events featuring Jolom Mayaetik.

Efficacy and Sustaining Economic Solidarity through Non-profit 501 C Status

Given the decentralized nature of our current network, increasing communication, coordination, and visibility in order to stay in touch with affiliates and recruit new solidarity activists in the US via web presence is vitally important. Telling the Jolom story and allowing people to get involved *in* the US is critical. This is important for selling the cooperative's textiles and initiatives through shops, tours, speaking engagements, and museum exhibits. Tours also function as sites for

popular education on issues of rights. Developing a website, Myspace, and electronic newsletter facilitates this process.

Working with coalition partners to identify technical resources is a strategic priority. Formalizing the business end of the US network as K'inál and Jolom have done via grants and consultants is necessary for sustainability. This will involve forming a 501C of some type, hiring and training a staff person to conduct Jolom Mayaetik business and in time, given Jolom's capacity, developing US inventory and tracking to do business on line. Internships linked to educational institutions and museums can be part of this. Seeking grants to further educational and health initiatives of Jolom fits the holistic sense of rights we share. Taken together, this process represents an attempt to institutionalize a commitment to economic solidarity for the long haul.

"They Can't Eat our Articles"—Solidarity, Efficacy, and the Academy

While visiting Jolom chapters in January 2009, a coffee producer *campesino* and organizer challenged my students by saying, "Are you going to do anything more than take photos?" The nuns in Tumbalá echoed this question when we were meeting with them.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, solidarity might go beyond the conventional academic and professional association paradigm but it need not. Our professional organizations make ostensible commitments to cultural survival and human rights and could function as umbrella organizations for our activist work. It makes more sense to approach this collectively than having so many different and inadequate part time efforts. Maybe creating a subpart of our professional associations with professional staff hired to help us do accounting, marketing, public relations, and grant writing in conjunction with social activists could work.

Linking to Social Justice Movements and Coalitions

For International Women's Day, March 2007, I was in Chiapas for two important events. I became *Dra. Planchadora*—chief ironer of the plastic nametags for the first Women's Conference of the FNLS held on March 7–9. 600 people carrying their own eating utensils and large sacks of food came from all over the state of Chiapas and

from hotspots of continuing repression, land expulsions, and conflicts over electricity and water. Others came from the states of Michoacán, Guerrero, Oaxaca, and the Federal Capital. All were grassroots activists—*campesinos*, teachers, union members, indigenous—who told of a 30 year and continuing history of struggle against militarization, neoliberalism, and state-sponsored violence.

Women from multiple organizations united under the FNLS tent to share their decades of struggles as activists within civil society and to learn from each other about how to tackle the issues emanating from “conquistador capitalism.” They concluded saying that the movement needed to work on strategies on issues like privatization and to share work and plans across regions as well.

Networking with our counterparts in social justice collective organizing is a critical organizational factor. Building effective coalitions with women’s and indigenous human rights groups—again as K’inal and Jolom have done in Chiapas, creates allies and opens up possibilities for resources. Linking to other social justice movements meets individual solidarity activists’ diverse political commitments and facilitates sharing of information and resources and links local groups to national and international global justice mobilizations. It will only be through dialogue that we can decide with which social movements to explicitly connect and align in the US.

Back to beads on a rosary, the organizing and networking strategies that have evolved for our work with Jolom in the US—Hail Marys—have worked to exponentially grow the list of people and places loving and buying our textiles and the Jolom story. It’s miraculous— and a lot of hard work. Now, the goal is to get us organized enough to support our mutual commitments to the communities and to meet collective and individual leaders’ goals of growing the next wave of artisans and social justice activists—north and south. Our transition involves moving toward autonomous, local councils with some national communication and mission, consensus decision-making, and representative leadership. We are moving from individualism toward collective action through solidarity actions with a goal of creating economic democracy. Maybe we are finally learning and applying the lessons we have been weaving with Jolom and K’inal—accompaniment, collective practice, solidarity, democracy, justice, hope—*poco a poco*. We have done a lot and there is a lot of work yet to do.



Figure 32 Hartwick College students and children from Bautista Chico coloring and writing words in three languages-English, Spanish, and Tzotzil 2009. Photographer: Katherine O'Donnell.

PART IV

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

ROSALINDA SANTIZ DIAZ SPEECH IN SOUTH AFRICA AT THE WORLD COURT OF WOMEN AGAINST WAR

Greeting in Tzotzil

To the women in the world,
To the women in this meeting
To the International Organizations of Human Rights

I am greeting with respect and solidarity all of the women in this meeting. My name is Rosalinda Santiz Diaz. I am indigenous, tzotzil, from the community Bayalemò, municipality San Andrés Sakam'chen de los Pobres, Highland region of Chiapas. I am the president of a women's artesan cooperative called Jolom Mayaetik, in English: Mayan weavers.

In Chiapas and all over Mexico the indigenous people have been exploited for the last 508 years. We're not taken into account, we're not recognized. There is no good education for us and the health service is not sufficient and bad. A lot of women die of curable diseases or giving birth. Not in all communities exist drinking water or electricity. We're not paid a good price for our work. For women there are few possibilities: or you get married or you work in the domestic service in the cities. In the cities our clothes and our language are despised, that's why some indigenous women lose their clothing and feel shame when they speak their language.

That's why in January of 1994 the Zapatista Army of National Liberation started an armed uprising. Parts of Civil Society joined the fight for our rights and the indigenous culture. In these moments thousands of women and men cross different places of Mexico, to make a weaving of voices, thoughts, fights and protests to construct our dignity.

From 1994 on, young indigenous women have been fighting, so that our words are heard, that we follow our hearts and thinking. During these years a lot of us have suffered from persecution, militarization, paramilitary groups, hunger, death threats, sexual violations, forced displacements as consequences of the so called Low Intensity Warfare. More than 20,000 indigenous people have lost their bits of land, their

homes and their working tools. For example, on 22nd of December of 1997, paramilitary groups killed 45 indigenous people, most of them women and children.

Also in my organization we suffered repression, because never we limited ourselves to the production and commercialization of crafts. When we were participating promoting the social and political participation of women we received death threats and in two occasions they came into our store and robbed crafts and information. The repression led us to the division of our first organization.

Today I am not living in my community, where women daily have to live with fear. Their lives are not the same as before the arrival of the militaries and the paramilitary groups. Now I am living in the City of San Cristóbal, but that's not easy either because it is another way of living and when I came I hardly spoke Spanish. In my community they speak in a bad manner because of the different traditions, for example in my community I am not allowed to walk alone, to laugh, I can't talk alone to a man and other things. When I walk alone in the City, people of my community say that I am only looking for a husband.

As I am participating in the fight of Civil Society I received letters with death threats, anonymous phone calls, I am shouted at in the streets, and in two occasions I have been attacked physically in the streets while I was walking with a *compañera*. They accused us to be zapatistas.

But nevertheless we move forward, we want to learn new things, we go on organizing ourselves. We demand that indigenous rights and our rights as women are respected. We want a serious revision of indigenous customs and traditions in our country, so that those don't do any harm to our hearts, our bodies and our thoughts as indigenous women.

We demand the right to own land, to have good education, a good health service and housing with dignity. We want our languages, there are more than 50 of them in Mexico, to be respected, we want a good price for our work, we don't want to be forced to marry. We demand the right to participate in communal and municipal Assemblies and the right to take communal and municipal responsibilities as part of the authorities. We demand a live with justice and dignity without any violence.

We want to have a future where today's thoughts get reality: that's why we are in the process of building our autonomy, it's ourselves who

decide what we want from naming our government by uses and traditions so that it is people's voice to have our own legislation. We want that the rights are known by everybody because often we don't know them. And we want to decide what education to give to our children.

Today I am happy to be in this land though I am far from my own country because I see and feel the other women fighting and suffering the consequences of the Wars which hurt us so very much. It is necessary to join our voices and to recover the strength of our hearts. Receive a warm greeting from all indigenous women who we are fighting in Mexico for a life with justice and dignity.

Most of us are weavers and today we give you the colours of our work to join your dances and songs, fights and reclaims of a better life.

Thank you

Long live all fighting women

Viva las mujeres en lucha (long live the women in struggle)

APPENDIX 2

MICAELA HERNÁNDEZ LOPEZ, COORDINADORA, K'INAL ANTZETIK, A.C., “SEMBRAR ES NUESTRA TRABAJO PARA CONSTRUIR LA RESISTENCIA DE LAS MUJERES INDIGENAS” 2001

“Tierra de Mujeres”

Las mujeres campesinas indígenas, durante muchos años hemos hecho camino para construir la resistencia y lucha por una vida más justa y digna. Hoy, somos varias jóvenes indígenas que trabajamos en la organización de K'in al Antzetik, para apoyar a otras mujeres de diferentes comunidades y municipios de Chiapas. La mayoría son tejedoras, cortan café sin ser dueñas de los cafetales, siembran maíz y frijol sin tener derecho a la tierra, somos las responsables de que nuestra cultura no se pierda, aunque el gobierno y las mismas organizaciones indígenas no tomen en cuenta nuestra palabra, pensamiento y corazón.

Son muchos los problemas que vamos cargando en este momento y vemos que una de las soluciones es darle fuerza a la participación y organización de las mujeres indígenas, por eso nos gusta ser un grupo y trabajar con grupos de mujeres, porque vemos la importancia que tiene un “colectivo de trabajo”, aquí es donde hablamos todas juntas para construir nuestro pensamiento, sacar y compartir el coraje por la justicia y los derechos humanos, la violencia doméstica, buscar juntas créditos o financiamientos para nuestro trabajo, participar en marchas de mujeres y hombres, hablar nosotras mismas de lo que vivimos y queremos en esta sociedad.

Vemos como organización, lo difícil que es para nosotras salir a otros lugares y hablar de nosotras mismas, no porque no nos guste conocer otras personas o tierras diferentes a las nuestras sino porque todos los trabajos de la familia los hacemos nosotras, pero hoy, cada día son más las mujeres jóvenes que seguimos sembrando lo que nuestras madres nos dejaron. Ellas no saben ni leer ni escribir, no hablan el español, pura lengua indígena, nunca pudieron solas ir a las instituciones del gobierno a solicitar sus demandas o créditos, pero su fuerza y trabajo existían; en la familia, comunidad o municipio, en las cooperativas de artesanías, en los grupos de trabajo de tortillerías, molinos de nixtamal,

en muchos otros trabajos. Por eso, en K'inal Antzetik, nos movemos con organizaciones de mujeres indígenas de todo el estado de Chiapas, para nosotras es importante la participación política no sólo nos preocupamos por conseguir nuestros créditos o financiamientos para trabajar, porque pensamos que no basta la ayuda económica para solucionar los problemas de las mujeres indígenas.

Ahora vemos, que en México uno de los proyectos principales es el "neoliberalismo", quieren privatizar hasta lo que comemos, sabemos que una de las tareas de esta política en Chiapas es ofrecernos trabajo a las mujeres indígenas o campesinas en fábricas maquiladoras, poco a poco quieren comprar nuestras tierras ejidales nos engañan con palabras y promesas que muchas veces no entendemos pero vemos cómo pasa la vida y la situación de las mujeres no cambia.

Por eso luchamos por nuestra autonomía, queremos gobernarnos con nuestras propias leyes, que se nos reconozca como pueblos indios, el respeto al derecho de nuestras tierras, ríos y lagos, lagunas, bosques, el derecho a opinar sobre proyectos económicos a tener toda la información para analizar y saber qué nos conviene trabajar, buscamos el derecho que tenemos como mujeres a no ser maltratadas por el marido ni por ninguna institución del gobierno, queremos participar en las leyes indígenas para dar a conocer nuestra voz y la vida que queremos para nuestros hijos o hijas.

Muchas mujeres indígenas estamos saliendo de nuestras comunidades para trabajar en las ciudades, no queremos seguir siendo explotadas como sirvientas, empleadas de tiendas donde muchas veces ni nos pagan lo que nos corresponde, son pocas las oportunidades para estudiar, no contamos con guarderías y ahora en muchos pueblos indígenas sólo quedan mujeres y hombres grandes porque para la juventud no hay otra salida para vivir o sobrevivir.

Ahora en Chiapas, tenemos el problema de la militarización aunque Vicente Fox diga que ya se van a salir y que los que se quedan van a ayudar a las comunidades campesinas. Nosotras nos preguntamos en qué nos van a ayudar, si ellos siguen, la prostitución avanza, son muchas las mujeres que ahora están embarazadas y solas ¿porque los militares las han engañado, otras por ser pobres les lavan y planchan la ropa para ganarse unos pesos y tener para comer, en qué nos van a ayudar: en cortar el pelo a nuestros maridos, padres o hijos sin cobrarles nada, en darnos trabajo para sobrevivir, en poner más cantinas y prostitución. Esta es la ayuda que nos ofrece Vicente Fox, pero no nos

explica que también están cuidando laboratorios en la Selva Lacandona y otros lugares para hacer experimentos con nuestras plantas, animales y semillas que tenemos para que las exploten las empresas internacionales. No nos dan información de porqué están fumigando las comunidades, porque lanzan gusanos sin explicarnos para qué van a servir, solo vemos como ahora las plagas en nuestros productos que sembramos ya no se acaban tan fácilmente.

Hoy queremos las mujeres indígenas que nos hablen claro, a quién van ayudar con sus políticas porque nosotras no vemos que vaya a cambiar nuestra vida. Hay lugares donde hombres y mujeres se están matando, se quitan la vida porque ya no aguantan más, no tienen cafetal ni tierra para trabajar, por eso nuestra organización y lucha es para muchos años. En el Primer Encuentro Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas, la comandanta Ramona del EZLN, estuvo con nosotras y voy a terminar con sus palabras esta participación que me han dado para saber porque las mujeres no vamos a descansar y seguiremos luchando:

Palabras de bienvenida de la Comandanta Ramona:

Compañeras:

Muchas resistencias hemos tenido que vencer para llegar hasta aquí: la de los dueños del poder que nos quieren tener separadas y calladas; la de los ricos de México, que nos quieren tener como animales para explotar; la de los extranjeros, que se quedan con nuestras mejores tierras y nos quieren como esclavas; la de los militares, que cercan nuestras comunidades, nos violan, amenazan a nuestros hijos, meten drogas y el alcohol, la prostitución y la violencia; la de los que quieren actuar y pensar en nuestro nombre, no les gusta que los indios y las indias digamos nuestra palabra y les da miedo nuestra rebeldía.

Para llegar hasta aquí, hemos tenido que vencer a todos lo que nos ven como algo que sobra, algo que quieren que no exista.

Hemos llegado hasta aquí venciendo también la resistencia de algunos de nuestros compañeros que no entienden la importancia de que las mujeres estemos participando de la misma manera que los hombres.

Por eso, en el Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, las mujeres nos organizamos para aprobar la Ley Revolucionaria de las Mujeres. A todos ellos y a nosotras queremos preguntar:

¿Sería posible que el zapatismo fuera lo que es sin sus mujeres?

¿La sociedad civil, indígena y no indígena, que tanto nos ha apoyado, sería lo mismo sin sus mujeres?

¿Se puede pensar en el México rebelde y nuevo que queremos construir, sin sus mujeres rebeldes y nuevas?

Con el 1°. De enero de 1994, los indios de México dijeron a toda la nación:

¡Nunca más un México sin nosotros!

Pero las indias y las no indias de México también hemos levantado nuestra voz, nosotras decimos:

¡Nunca más un México sin nosotras!

¡Nunca más una rebelión sin nosotras!

¡Nunca más una vida sin nosotras!

Comandanta Ramona.

Gracias por su atención a mis palabras.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

MICAELA HERNÁNDEZ LOPEZ, DIRECTOR,
K'INAL ANTZETIK, A.C., "OUR JOB IS TO SOW THE SEEDS
TO BUILD INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RESISTENCE"

"Tierra de Mujeres" (Women's Land).

Rural indigenous women for many years have been opening the way towards building the resistance and the struggle for a life that is more just and dignified. Today, we are various young indigenous women who are working in the organization K'in al Antzetik, to support woman from different communities and towns in Chiapas. The majority are weavers, they cut coffee without being the owners of the coffee fields, they sow corn and beans without the right to the land, we are responsible for making sure that our culture doesn't get lost, even though the government and the same indigenous organizations do not take into account our word, thought and heart.

There are many problems we are shouldering at this moment, and we see that one of the solutions is to give strength to indigenous women's participation and organization, we like being a group and working with women's groups because we see the importance of being a work collective, here is where we talk all together to construct our thoughts, bring out and share the anger about justice and human rights, domestic violence, look for credit together or ways to finance our work, participate in marches of women or men, speak for ourselves of what we live and want in this society.

We see that as an organization, how hard it is for us to go out to other places and speak about ourselves, not because we don't like to meet other people or see other lands but because we do all the work of the family ourselves, but today, every day, there are more young women who continue reaping what our mothers left us. They don't know how to read or write, and they don't speak Spanish, only pure indigenous language, they never could go by themselves to the government offices to make their demands or ask for a loan, but their strength and work existed...in the family, community or town, in the artisan's cooperatives, in the tortilla shop work groups, in the corn flour mills, in many other jobs. For that reason, in K'in al Antzetik,

we associate with indigenous women's organizations all over the state of Chiapas, for us political participation is important, not only do we worry about getting credit or financing in order to work, because we don't think the economic assistance given to indigenous women to solve their problems is enough.

Now we see that in Mexico, one of the principal projects is the "neoliberalism", they want to privatize even what we eat, we know that one of the tasks of this policy in Chiapas is to offer the indigenous or rural women work in *maquiladora* factories, little by little they want to buy our community lands, and with words and promises that often we do not understand, they cheat us (trick us) but we see what is going on in life and the situation of women doesn't change.

For that reason we fight for our autonomy, we want to govern ourselves with our own laws, we want to be recognized as Indian peoples, with respect for the rights to our lands, rivers, lakes, lagoons, forests, the right to have an opinion about economic projects, to have all the information to analyze and know what is best for us to do, we look for the right we have as women to not be abused by our husbands nor by any government institution, we want to participate in indigenous laws in order to make known our voice and our life that we want for our sons and daughters.

Many of us indigenous women are leaving our communities to work in the cities, we don't want to continue to be exploited as servants, employees of stores where many times they don't even pay us what they owe us, there are few opportunities to study, we don't have daycare and now, in many indigenous villages there are only women and old men because for the young, there is no other option to earn a living or survive.

In Chiapas now we have the problem of militarization although Vicente Fox says that they are going to leave and that those who stay are going to help the rural communities. We wonder how they are going to help us, if they stay, prostitution will grow, right now there are many women who are pregnant and alone because the soldiers have tricked them, others because they are poor wash and iron clothes to earn a few pesos so they can eat, so how are they going to help us: cutting our husbands', fathers' or sons' hair without charging us for it, or by giving us work so we can survive, or by putting up more cantinas and prostitution? This is the help Vicente Fox is offering us, but he doesn't explain that they are also taking care of laboratories in the

Lacandon jungle and other places to make experiments with our plants, animals and seeds, so that international corporations can exploit them. They don't give us information about why they are spraying pesticides in the villages, why they spread around worms without telling us what they are for, all we see now are the diseases on our products that we grew that won't go away so easily.

Today we indigenous women want to speak clearly, who are they going to help with their policies/politics because we don't see that it is going to change our lives. There are places where men and women are killing each other, they take each other's lives because they can't take it anymore, they don't have coffee groves or land to work, for that reason, our organization and fight will last many years. During the First National Encounter of Indigenous Women, *commandant* Ramona of the EZLN was with us and I am going to end this opportunity to speak that I have been given with her words so you will know why we women are not going to rest and we will continue fighting:

Welcome from *Commandant* Ramona:

Fellow Women

We have had to break down the resistance of many in order to get this far: that of the owners of power who want us separate and quiet; that of the rich people in Mexico, who want to have us like animals to exploit; that of the foreigners, who keep our best lands and want us like slaves; that of the military, who fence off our communities, who rape us, threaten our children, bring in drugs and alcohol, prostitution and violence; that of those who would like to act and think in our names, they don't like that the Indian men and women speak for ourselves and they are afraid we will rebel.

To get this far, we have had to win over all those who see us as something like rubbish, something that they want not to exist.

We have gotten this far fighting the resistance of some of our colleagues who don't understand the importance of women participating in the same ways that men do.

For that reason, in the EZLN, women are organizing to pass the Revolutionary Law of Women. We want to ask all of them and ourselves:

Could Zapatismo be what it is without its women?

Would the NGO's, indigenous and non-indigenous, who have helped us so much, be the same without their women?

Is it possible to think of the new and revolutionary Mexico that we want to build, without new rebel women?

On December 1, 1994, the Indians of Mexico told the whole nation:

Never again a Mexico without us!

But the Indian women and non-Indian women of Mexico have also lifted up their voices, and we say:

Never again a Mexico without us!

Never again a rebellion without us!

Never again a life without us!

APPENDIX 3

MICAELA HERNÁNDEZ MEZA, COORDINADORA DE K'NAL ANTZETIK, "DE TRABAJADORA DOMÉSTICA A COORDINADORA DE UNA ONG"

Me llamo Micaela Hernández Meza, soy indígena tseltal, de la comunidad Xixintonil del municipio Tenejapa, de los Altos de Chiapas, México.

Hoy voy a hablar de mi vida personal, y como me fortalecí, ya organizándome con otras mujeres.

Soy la más grande de 9 hermanos y hermanas, desde chiquita empecé a cuidarlos a todos y todas, los cuidaba cuando mi mamá se fue a trabajar a la milpa. Cuando tenía 4, 5 años ya empecé a cargar mis hermanitos. Cuando empezaron a llorar, mi mamá y mi papá me regañaron porque dijeron que no los cuidaba bien. Me dijeron: "Mejor, vete a trabajar, si no sabes cuidarlos bien". Yo me aburrí de cargarlos, como era todo el día, también empecé a llorar yo, cuando los chiquitos no se querían calmar. Y cuando se cayeron los niños, me pegaban a mí. A mí me pegaban mucho, por ejemplo cuando empecé a hacer tortilla, y no salía bien, todo salía como doble, entonces nos regañaban, siempre me decían: "Cuándo vas a tener marido, y no sabes hacer tortilla,..." y eso que yo tenía solamente 6,7 años. Luego también me enojé porque en lugar de enseñarme bien, era puro regaño. Para aprender nos quemaron con la tortilla caliente. Así crecimos, yo y mi hermana que sigue, siempre teníamos que trabajar, cuidar a los niños, trabajar en el campo y en la casa también. Y también nos pegaban mucho, yo me escapé, una vez, me acuerdo, que me había escapado y luego me encontró mi papá y me jaló hasta la casa, donde me dio el cinturón.

Y después de esto, tenía yo como 8, 9 o 10 años mi papá nos llevó a trabajar a una finca, para trabajar en el corte de café. Y allí, me tocó cargar el café. También me estaba regañando el dueño porque pensaba que trabajaba muy lento. Yo nada más pensé que esto no era mi trabajo, que no nací para cortar el café para otras personas, a veces incluso bajo la lluvia. Incluso una vez fuimos todos con mi mamá, mi papá y una hermana, nos fuimos a la finca como por 1 mes o dos meses, cuando en el camión, se nos perdió toda la ropa, y sufrimos mucho. El

trabajo era de levantarnos a los 4 y medio para caminar hasta el cafetal, a veces regresamos hasta las 6 de la tarde. Esta vez que nos quedamos sin ropa, me pregunté ¿porque teníamos que sufrir tanto, porque existía la pobreza?

Cuando fuimos a las fincas, pues, dejé de ir a la escuela, por eso reprobé 3 años, porque nunca pude asistir todos los días a la escuela. Para mi familia era más importante salir a buscar trabajo. Mi maestro me regañaba porque no llegaba al diario a la escuela, yo le decía que no era mi culpa, porque era porque me llevaban a trabajar, pero el maestro no lo quería entender. Sin embargo, seguía yendo a la escuela, aunque mis compañeros ya habían terminado. Cuando terminé mi primaria ya tenía 16 años.

Después de la primaria me hubiera gustado seguir estudiando, pero mis papás me dijeron, si salgo a otro lugar para estudiar, solo voy a buscar marido, y regresar con la “panza”, embarazada. Todavía hoy les reclamo a mis papás porque no me dejaron estudiar, y ellos dicen pues, que no tenían dinero, pero mis hermanitas ahora si las dejan, pero no es que tengan mucho más dinero.

Mi infancia era mucho sufrir, primero porque tenía que cuidar todo, segundo por todo el trabajo en la casa y en la milpa, y también porque me llevaban a trabajar. Por eso después quería salir de la comunidad.

Un día una maestra de la escuela me preguntó si no quería acompañarla para trabajar para ella, allí mismo en la comunidad. Le pedí permiso a mi papá, pero él no estaba de acuerdo, pero aún así, yo lo hice. Después la maestra me invitó a acompañarla a San Cristóbal. Todavía fui a mi casa, para decirles a mis papás que me iba a San Cristóbal, pero me dijeron de nuevo, que no. No les hice caso y me fui, incluso hice mentira con la maestra, le dije que si que me dejaron ir. Ya me quedé en la casa de la maestra en San Cristóbal, ya no regresé a la comunidad.

Hice todo el trabajo para la maestra, ella me trató bien, pero nunca me pagó. Después dije que ya no quería quedarme con ella, que quería regresar a mi casa. No se vayan a reír de mí, yo regresé no porque no estaba bien con la maestra, sino porque en este momento se me bajó mi regla por primera vez, y me espanté mucho. Por eso quería regresar.

De regreso en mi casa, me quedé encerrada un rato, cuando por fin supe lo que me había pasado, regresé con la maestra. Le ayudé en su casa, y también a su hermana, que tenía hijos. No me pagaban, sólo de vez en cuando me daban un poco para mi gasto. Después quería buscar otro trabajo, por eso me salí de la casa.

Otra vez regresé a mi casa, otra vez quería salir a trabajar, pero mi papá no quería dejarme ir, porque quería que trabajara en la casa. Entonces, un día, me había levantado con mi mamá a la 1 de la mañana para hacer la tortilla, y antes de que se despertara mi papá me salí. Fui a trabajar con otra maestra. Ya empecé a ganar dinero, pero mandé todo con mis papás. Así se pusieron más contentos. Una vez me visitaron y la maestra les dijo que yo me portara bien, entonces más contentos se pusieron. Después encontré otros trabajos, donde me pagaron mejor. En un trabajo me quedé solo un mes porque el maestro era mañoso, nada más esperó hasta que se durmió su mujer, y luego entró a mi cuarto. Eso no me gustó, sabía que aunque siendo “muchacha” que me tenían que respetar como persona humana.

Por último trabajé en otra casa, a veces estaba mirando a la vecina que parecía buena persona. A veces empezamos a hablar. La vecina era asesora de una cooperativa de artesanas, y un día me invitó a trabajar en la tienda de esta cooperativa. Esta cooperativa se llamaba J'pas Joloviletik, y era una cooperativa asesorada por el INI, Instituto Nacional Indigenista de 850 artesanas de diferentes municipios.

Cuando entré a trabajar me dio miedo, porque me dijeron que tenía que hablar con los clientes, pero rápido aprendí como hablar y como atender la tienda, como ir al banco y todas estas cosas. También allí ya tenía que hablar español.

También empecé a asistir en las Asambleas. Eso fue en el año 1992.

En el año 1994 pasó el levantamiento armado del EZLN en Chiapas. Desde antes del levantamiento, nosotras las mujeres de la cooperativa y también algunas de las asesoras y yo también, empezamos a estar en marchas y en Foros sobre los derechos de las mujeres indígenas. Por toda la participación que teníamos, nos empezaron a amenazar, y también empezamos a tener problemas con el INI. Porque nosotras estábamos cuestionando porque eran ellos que tenían toda la información, porque eran ellos, quienes estaban controlando el dinero, que no informaban a las mujeres, etc.

Cuando por segunda vez entraron a robar en la tienda, llevaron mucha información, prendas de valor, teléfono, etc., algunas de las mujeres se enojaron, porque unas nada más querían vender sus productos. Otras querían también participar y saber más sobre sus derechos y pensaban que era importante de que la voz de las mujeres indígenas se escuchara. Las que sí querían organizarse, se separaban de la cooperativa J'pas Joloviletik y formaron a la cooperativa independiente Jolom Mayaetik.

También en este momento nos separamos del INI, y las que no éramos de la cooperativa, pero que sí apoyábamos, fundamos a la Asociación K'inal Antzetik. Fundamos a esta organización porque era difícil de tener financiamiento para una cooperativa, también vimos que era necesario apoyar en otras áreas de su vida que no tenían que ver con las artesanías, por ejemplo el tema de salud, el tema de educación. También queríamos que la cooperativa tuviera su propia estructura, que tomara sus propias decisiones sin que nosotras nos meteríamos en todo. El objetivo de K'inal Antzetik era más bien acompañar su proceso y fortalecerlas para que cada vez caminaran más autónomas.

Seguimos participando en Foros y marchas y también otros grupos se enteraron del trabajo que nosotras hacíamos y pidieron también nuestra asesoría, así empezamos a trabajar con otros grupos.

Hoy seguimos en la organización K'inal Antzetik, estamos trabajando en diferentes regiones y con diferentes grupos y organizaciones. Desde el año 2001 yo soy la Coordinadora de esta organización. Casi no hay ONGs que tienen a mujeres indígenas como Coordinadoras.

Todos estos años, desde que entré a trabajar en la tienda, aprendí mucho y me fortalecí mucho. No solamente aprendí a hablar, a tener conocimientos técnicos, también aprendí que como mujeres indígenas nosotras podemos seguir adelante, que nosotras tenemos la fuerza y el valor de pedir justicia, que la pobreza y el racismo no es culpa de nosotras sino que hay todo un sistema, que nos oprime. México es un país rico en recursos naturales, pero el dinero está mal distribuido. El gobierno solo ayuda a los que de por sí tienen dinero, a los empresarios, favorecen a los inversionistas extranjeros. Lo que quieren es poder explotar mejor los recursos que nosotros tenemos como indígenas.

Ahora vemos, que en México uno de los proyectos principales es el “neoliberalismo”, quieren privatizar hasta lo que comemos, sabemos que una de las tareas de esta política en Chiapas es ofrecernos trabajo a las mujeres indígenas o campesinas en fábricas maquiladoras, poco a poco quieren comprar nuestras tierras ejidales o comunales, nos engañan con palabras y promesas que muchas veces no entendemos pero vemos cómo pasa la vida y la situación de las mujeres no cambia.

Por eso luchamos por nuestra autonomía, queremos gobernarnos con nuestras propias leyes, que se nos reconozca como pueblos indios, el respeto al derecho de nuestras tierras, ríos y lagos, lagunas, bosques, el derecho a opinar sobre proyectos económicos a tener toda la información para analizar y saber qué nos conviene trabajar, buscamos el

derecho que tenemos como mujeres a no ser maltratadas por el marido ni por ninguna institución del gobierno, queremos participar en las leyes indígenas para dar a conocer nuestra voz y la vida que queremos para nuestros hijos o hijas.

Muchas mujeres indígenas estamos saliendo de nuestras comunidades para trabajar en las ciudades, no queremos seguir siendo explotadas como sirvientas, empleadas de tiendas donde muchas veces ni nos pagan lo que nos corresponde, son pocas las oportunidades para estudiar, no contamos con guarderías y ahora en muchos pueblos indígenas solo quedan mujeres y hombres grandes porque para la juventud no hay otra salida para vivir o sobrevivir.

También ahora se está hablando mucho del Plan Puebla Panamá. ¿Qué es eso? Pues, el Plan Puebla Panamá, supuestamente dicen que nos va llevar el desarrollo, pero finalmente nada más, van a dar dinero para construir más carreteras, represas hidroeléctricas, maquiladoras. ¿Y a quién le va a servir? Pues, solamente a los ricos que quieren los recursos naturales y que quieren a los indígenas como mano de obra barata. Nunca nos han preguntado qué tipo de desarrollo queremos nosotras.

También aprendí que es importante organizarse, que juntas podemos lograr ser escuchadas, y decir nuestra palabra.

Vemos como organización, lo difícil que es para nosotras salir a otros lugares y hablar de nosotras mismas, no porque no nos guste conocer otras personas o tierras diferentes a las nuestras sino porque todos los trabajos de la familia los hacemos nosotras, pero hoy, cada día son más las mujeres jóvenes que seguimos sembrando lo que nuestras madres nos dejaron. Ellas no saben ni leer ni escribir, no hablan el español pura lengua indígena, nunca pudieron solas ir a las instituciones del gobierno a solicitar sus demandas o créditos, pero su fuerza y trabajo existían; en la familia, comunidad o municipio, en las cooperativas de artesanías, en los grupos de trabajo de tortillerías, molinos de nixtamal, en muchos otros trabajos. Por eso, en K'inál Antzetik, nos movemos con organizaciones de mujeres indígenas de todo el estado de Chiapas, para nosotras es importante la participación política no sólo nos preocupamos por conseguir nuestros créditos o financiamientos para trabajar, porque pensamos que no basta la ayuda económica para solucionar los problemas de las mujeres indígenas.

Mi trabajo no siempre ha sido fácil, los procesos de las mujeres son muy, muy lentos, y a veces nos tenemos que enfrentar a muchos conflictos. También todavía hoy a veces siento que no me respetan igual

como a una mujer mestiza. Como no tengo tanto estudio pues me miran diferente, hablo diferente, y todo eso pues es difícil. Yo quiero que nos respeten, que podemos hacer el trabajo igual. Y así podemos caminar juntos si hay respeto entre nosotros.

El trabajo también ha tenido impactos en mi vida personal. Ya llevo varios años que me junté con mi compañero y tengo dos hijos. Como lucho por los derechos de las mujeres, también quiero que me respeten en mi casa. Con mi compañero por ejemplo quiero que respete mi trabajo, tiene que entender que a veces tengo que salir y también a él le toca quedarse con los niños. Para mí no es fácil dejar a los niños porque todavía les falta mucho a los hombres. Los cambios se dan también aquí muy lentos.

Hoy queremos las mujeres indígenas que nos hablen claro, a quién van ayudar con sus políticas porque nosotras no vemos que vaya a cambiar nuestra vida.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

MICAELA HERNÁNDEZ MEZA, DIRECTOR OF K'INAL
ANTZETIK "FROM DOMESTIC SERVANT TO
COORDINATOR OF AN NGO"

My name is Micaela Hernandez Meza, I am indigenous Tzeltal, from the village of Xixintonil in the county of Tenejapa, in the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico.

Today I am going to speak of my personal life, and how I grew strong and got organized with other women.

I am the oldest of 9 brothers and sisters, since I was little I started taking care of all the smaller girls and boys, I took care of them when my mother went to work in the corn fields. When I was 4 or 5, I began to carry my little brothers and sisters. When they started to cry, my mother and my father would scold me because they said I didn't care for them well. They told me, "Better, you go to work, if you can't care for them right." When they fell down, they would hit me. They used to hit me a lot, for example, when I started to make tortillas and they would come out bad, then they would scold me, they always said, "When you get married, you don't even know how to make a tortilla" and that was when I was only 6 or 7 years old. Later I got mad because instead of teaching me well, it was just scolding. So we would learn, they burned us with hot tortillas. That's how we grew up, my sister who comes after me and I, we always had to work, take care of the kids, work in the fields and at home, too. They used to hit us, too, but I ran away once, I remember, I got away and later my father found me and he hauled me back home, where he gave me the belt.

Well, after that, I was about 8 or 9 or 10 years old, my father took us to work on a farm, to work in the coffee harvest. And there, I had to carry the coffee. The owner was always yelling at me because he thought I worked really slow. I just thought, this isn't my job, that I wasn't born to cut coffee for other people, sometimes even under the rain. One time we all went with my mother, my father and my sister, we went to the farm for one or two months, when on the bus, we lost our clothes and we suffered a lot. For that work, we had to get up at 4:30 to walk out to the coffee groves, sometimes we came back at 6:00

at night. That time we were left with no clothes, I wondered, “Why do we have to suffer so much, why does poverty exist?”

When we went to the farms, I had to stop going to school, so I failed 3 years because I never could go to school every day. For my family, it was more important for me to go out to look for work. My teacher scolded me because I didn’t go to school every day, and I told him it wasn’t my fault, it was because they took me to work, but the teacher didn’t want to understand. Anyway, I still went to school, even though my classmates had stopped. I was 16 years old when I finished elementary school.

After elementary school I would have liked to continue studying, but my parents said if I go somewhere else to study, I will only go find a husband and come back with a big tummy, pregnant. I still complain to them because they didn’t let me study, and they say, well, we didn’t have any money, but now they let my sisters, even though they still don’t have much money.

I suffered a lot in my childhood, first because I had to take care of everything, second because of all the work in the corn fields and at home, and also because they took me to work. That’s why later I wanted to leave the village.

One day the school teacher asked me if I didn’t want to go with her, to work with her, right there in the village. I asked my father for permission, but he didn’t agree, but even so, I did it. Later the teacher invited me to go with her to San Cristóbal. I still went home, to tell my parents I was going to San Cristóbal, but again they told me no. I didn’t pay attention, I went, and I even lied to the teacher, I told her they had let me go. I stayed at the teacher’s house in San Cristóbal and I didn’t go back to the village. I did all the work for the teacher, she treated me well, but she never paid me. Later I told her I didn’t want to stay with her, that I wanted to go home. Please don’t go and laugh at me, I went home, not because it wasn’t OK with the teacher, but because at that moment, I got my period for the first time, and it scared me a lot! That’s why I wanted to return.

After going home, I stayed inside awhile, and when I finally figured out what had happened, I went back with the teacher. I helped her in the house, also her sister, who had children. They didn’t pay me, only once in a while did they give me anything for my expenses. Later I wanted to find another job, and that’s why I left their house.

Once more I went home, and again, I wanted to leave to find work, but my father didn't want to let me because he wanted me to work at home. So one day, I got up with my mother at 1:00 am to make tortillas, and before my father got up, I left. I went to work with another teacher. I was beginning to make money, but I sent it all home to my parents. So they were happier. One time they visited me and the teacher told them that I behaved well, and they were even happier. Later I found other jobs, where they paid me better. In one job, I stayed only one month because the teacher had busy hands, as soon as his wife would go to sleep, he entered my room. I didn't like that, and that even though I was a servant, he had to respect me as a human person.

Finally, I worked in another house, and sometimes I would look at the neighbor lady who seemed like a good person. Sometimes we would start to talk. The neighbor lady was an advisor for an artisan's cooperative, and one day she invited me to work in the cooperative's store. The cooperative was named J'pas Joloviletik, and it was a cooperative advised by the INI, the National Indigenous Institute, of 850 artisans from different counties.

When I started to work, I was scared, because they told me I had to talk to the clients, but I learned quickly how to speak and how to tend the store, and go to the bank and things like that. I also had to speak Spanish.

I began to attend Assemblies. That was in 1992.

In 1994 the armed uprising of the EZLN occurred in Chiapas. Since the uprising, we women of the cooperative and some of the advisors and I, too, started to be in marches and in forums for indigenous women's rights. Because of all of the participation we had, they began to threaten us and we began to have problems with the INI. Because we were questioning why it was them that had all the information, why them who controlled all the money, and didn't tell anything to the women, etc.

When they came in to rob the store for the second time, they took a lot of information, articles of value, the telephone, etc., some of the women got angry, because all they wanted was to sell their products. Others wanted to participate, too, and knew more about their rights and thought it was important that the voice of indigenous women be heard. Those of us who wanted to organize, separated from the cooperative J'pas Joloviletik and formed the independent cooperative Jolom Mayaetik.

At this moment, we separated from the INI, those of us who weren't in the cooperative but we supported it, we founded the K'in al Antzetik Association. We founded this organization because it was hard to get financing for a cooperative, and also we saw it was necessary to support other areas of life that didn't have to do with the crafts, for example the areas of health or education. We also wanted the cooperative to have its own structure and to make its own decisions without us getting involved in everything. The objective of K'in al Antzetik was more to go along with the process and strengthen us so that we could become more autonomous.

We still participated in forums and marches and also other groups found out about what we were doing and asked us for advice, and that's how we started to work with other groups.

Today we continue in the organization K'in al Antzetik, we are working in different regions with different groups and organizations. Since the year 2001 I am the Coordinator of this organization. There are hardly any NGO's with indigenous women as the coordinator.

All these years, since I began working in the store, I have learned a lot and I have gained strength. Not only did I learn to speak, to have technical knowledge, I also learned how we indigenous women can get ahead, that we have the strength and the courage to ask for justice, that poverty and racism aren't our fault and that there is a whole system that oppresses us. Mexico is a country rich in natural resources, but the money is badly distributed. What they want is power to better exploit the resources that we have as indigenous women.

Now we see that in Mexico one of the principal projects is the "neoliberalism", they want to privatize even what we eat, we know that one of the tasks of this policy in Chiapas is to offer us indigenous or rural women work in *maquiladora* factories, little by little they want to buy our communal lands, they trick us with words and promises that many times we don't understand but we see how life goes on and how the situation of women doesn't change.

For that reason, we fight for our autonomy, we want to govern ourselves with our own laws, we want them to recognize us as Indian peoples, respect the rights to our lands, rivers and lakes, lagoons, forests, the right to express an opinion on economic projects and have all the information necessary to analyze and know what is best for us to do, we seek the right we have as women to not be mistreated by our husbands nor by any government institution, we want to participate

in the indigenous laws in order to make our voice known and the life we want for our sons and daughters.

Many indigenous women are going out of our villages to work in the cities, we don't want to continue being exploited as servants, store employees where many times they don't pay us what is our due, there are few opportunities to study, there are no day care centers and now in many indigenous towns only women and old men remain because young people have no other option to leave to survive.

Now they are talking a lot about Plan Puebla Panama. What is that? Well, the Plan Puebla Panama, supposedly is going to bring us development, but in the end, they are going to give money to build more highways, hydroelectric dams, and factories. Who will benefit? Well, only the rich people who want the natural resources and want the indigenous people as cheap labor. They never asked us what kind of development we want.

I also learned it is important to organize, that together we can make ourselves heard and say our part.

We see as an organization how hard it is for us to go out to other places and talk about ourselves, not because we don't like to meet other people or see places that are different from ours, but because we are the ones who do all of the family work, but today, every day there are more young women who keep reaping what our mothers sowed. They don't even know how to read and write, they don't speak Spanish, just indigenous languages, they never could go to government institutions alone to ask for what is due us or for credit, but their strength and their work do exist; at home, in the village or in the county, in the artisan's cooperatives, in the work groups in the tortilla shops, in the corn flour mills, in many other jobs. For that reason, in K'inál Antzetik, we associate with indigenous women's organizations all over the state of Chiapas, for us, political participation is important, it's not just that we worry about getting credit or financing in order to work, because we think there isn't enough economic assistance to solve the problems of indigenous women.

My job has not always been easy, the processes for women are slow, very slow, and sometimes we have to face many conflicts. Also, sometimes today I feel that they don't respect me the same as a *mestiza* woman. And since I don't have a lot of schooling, they look at me differently, I speak differently, well, everything is hard. I want them

to respect us, I want us to be able to do equal work. That way we can walk together, if there is respect among us.

Work has also had an impact on my personal life. I got together with my partner a few years ago and I have two children. Since I fight for women's rights, I also want them to respect me in the home. I want my partner to respect my work, he has to understand that sometimes I have to leave and it will fall on him to stay with the children. It isn't easy me to leave the kids, because men still have a lot to learn. Change here is very slow in this area, too.

Today we indigenous women want to be spoken to frankly, we want to know who will be helped with these policies because we don't see how they are going to change our life.

APPENDIX 4

ROSALINDA SANTIZ DIAZ, INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY SPEECH

8 de Marzo de 2000
San Cristóbal, Chiapas

Bienvenidas mujeres bases de apoyo del EZLN y mujeres de la Sociedad Civil de diferentes lugares, tzeltales y tzotziles, tojolabales, choles y mujeres que hablan el castellano en este día tan importante para todas las mujeres del mundo. Estoy muy contenta de que hay muchas mujeres participando y manifestándose. Sabemos que no solo en Chiapas estamos marchando sino que en todo México y en otros países también. Hoy mujeres de diferentes países como la República Dominicana, Brasil, España, Francia, Suiza, Italia, Alemania nos están mandando saludos a esta marcha de mujeres zapatistas y de mujeres de la Sociedad Civil. Ellas, las mujeres internacionales admiran el valor de todas que estamos hoy marchando y aunque no están ahora en las calles de San Cristóbal nos están diciendo que están aquí con sus corazones marchando a nuestro lado.

Este 8 de Marzo recordamos de historia de este DIA INTERNACIONAL DE LA MUJER: El 8 de Marzo de 1857 miles mujeres obreras de Nueva York, Estados Unidos, marcharon por mejores condiciones de trabajo y la reducción a 8 horas de su jornada de trabajo que era de 16 horas diarias. La marcha fue reprimida con mucha violencia por la policía y 129 mujeres resultaron muertas. Hoy pensamos en estas mujeres y todas las mujeres que dejaron su vida en la lucha por sus derechos: Pensamos en las mujeres de Nueva York que lucharon por mejores condiciones de trabajo, pensamos en las mujeres que lucharon por ser reconocidas y respetadas en sus propias casas, pensamos en las mujeres en todos los lugares del mundo que se levantaron por una vida digna, contra la opresión y contra el maltrato. Pensamos también en las mujeres de Chiapas que han muerto por haber luchado por tener una vida nueva, en las mujeres que han muerto por falta de servicio de salud, que han muerto por la violencia domestica.

Pero también es un día en el que seguimos con la lucha de nuestras compañeras que nos dieron el ejemplo y sin ellas no estuviéramos hoy acá celebrando este 8 de Marzo. Nuestra lucha como mujeres aquí en Chiapas y en todo México es porque queremos una vida más justa donde podemos participar todas, sin importar el color, la religión, la lengua, el lugar de origen, y la edad; una vida en donde seamos reconocidas como mujeres y en la que nos respetemos entre nosotras. Sabemos que es difícil de estar participando, porque recibimos muchas amenazas de los compañeros que no están luchando. Pero seguimos con la lucha porque todavía falta en nuestras comunidades de que un día vivamos mejor con nuestros hijos e hijas aunque nosotras ya no estemos. Sabemos que están los militares, que nos están hostigando, nos meten mucho miedo, no nos dejan vivir tranquilamente, destruyen la vida en nuestras comunidades. No solo con los militares sino también en nuestras casas sufrimos de que muchas veces no está reconocido el trabajo que hacemos las mujeres.

Pero vemos que nosotras podemos hacer muchas cosas que no sólo sabemos hacer el trabajo en la casa, podemos opinar y decidir, que es lo que queremos hacer. Ya no queremos que tantos años nos han dicho que nosotras no tenemos derecho de hacer lo que queremos. Pero eso a veces nos lo creemos y pensamos que no podemos participar, pero no es así. Podemos salir a participar en público, podemos marchar, podemos hablar, podemos decidir con quién casarnos o de no casarnos, podemos decidir cuántos hijos tener y cuándo. Ya no vamos a permitir que nos obliguen a quedarnos calladas en la casa o en otros lugares.

Por eso hoy levantamos nuestras voces y gritamos con toda nuestra fuerza:

*¡ VIVA LA LUCHA DE LAS MUJERES!
¡ VIVAN LAS MUJERES ZAPATISTAS!
¡ VIVAN LAS MUJERES ORGANIZADAS DE LA SOCIEDAD CIVIL!
¡VIVA LA COMANDANTA RAMONA!
¡VIVA ANA MARÍA!
¡ MUJERES UNIDAS JAMÁS SERÁN VENCIDAS!*

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

ROSALINDA SANTIZ DIAZ, INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
SPEECH

March 8, 2000
San Cristóbal, Chiapas

Welcome support women from EZLN and women from the Civil Societies from different places, Tzeltales and Tzotziles, tojolabales, choles, and women who speak Spanish, on this very important day for all the women in the world.

I am very pleased that so many women are participating and demonstrating. We know that not only in Chiapas are we marching, but all over Mexico and in other countries, too. Today, women from different countries like the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Spain, France, Switzerland, Italy and Germany are sending us greetings in this Zapatista women's march and women from the Civil Society. They, the international women, admire the courage of all of us who are marching and even though they are not here in the streets of San Cristobal, they are telling us that they are here in their hearts, marching at our sides.

On this day, March 8, we remember the history of International Women's Day. On this day, March 8, 1857, thousands of women workers in New York, United States, marched for better work conditions and a reduced work day to 8 hours a day instead of 16 hours a day. The march was put down with much police violence, resulting in 129 women dead. Today we think about these women and all the women who have lost their lives fighting for their rights; we think about the women who have fought for recognition and respect in their own homes, we think about all the women all over the world who have risen up for a dignified life, against oppression and against abuse. We also think about the women in Chiapas who have died for having fought to have a new life, about those women who have died because of a lack of health services, who have died from domestic violence.

But also this is a day when we continue with the struggle of the women who were an example for us and without whom we would not be here celebrating this 8th of March. Our struggle as women here in

Chiapas and in all of Mexico is because we want a life that is more just, where all of us can participate, regardless of color, religion, language, or place, with respect for each other. We know it is hard to participate because we receive many threats from our partners (men) who are not fighting. But we continue with the fight because in our communities, we want to make sure that one day we have a better life with our sons and daughters, even though we ourselves are not here. We know that the military is here, that they are harassing us and they put much fear into us, they don't let us live peacefully, they destroy the life in our communities. Not only with the military but also in our own homes we suffer because many times they do not recognize the work that we women do.

But we see that we can do many things, not only do we know our work at home, we can give an opinion and decide what we want to do. We don't want it to be like it has been for so many years, they have told us that we don't have the right to do what we want. But sometimes we don't believe it and we think we can't participate, but it isn't like that. We can go out and participate in public, we can march, we can talk, we can decide whom to marry or to not get married, we can decide how many children to have and when. No longer will we permit them to force us to remain silent at home or in other places.

For that reason, today we raise our voices and shout with all our might

Viva the struggle of the women
Viva the Zapatista women
Viva the Foundation's organized women
Viva *Comandanta* Ramona
Women United will never be defeated.

APPENDIX 5

SYLLABUS SOC 350 2005 GLOBALIZING SOLIDARITY:
FAIR TRADE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS
COURSE DELEGATION TO CHIAPAS, MEXICO

Fall, 2004

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The effects of globalization are being contested and discussed North and South. We enter this dialogue and begin by examining our own US policies regarding immigration, racial segregation, racial stereotyping, economic inequality, labor conditions, and human rights. The course also acquaints students with the cultural traditions of the Mayan people including their cosmology as revealed in language, art, and architecture, issues of contact during Spanish colonization, and contemporary political, economic, and social issues for the region of Chiapas, Mexico.

Principal Texts

Collier, G. *Basta!* Land and the Zapatista Revolution.
Red de Solidaridad de la Maquila-Stop Sweatshops Action/education kit
Nash, June Mayan Visions
EPICA—Globalization of Hope
American Friends Service—The *Maquiladora* Reader-Cross Border
Organizing since NAFTA (AFSC)
Grimes, K. Artisans and Cooperatives—Developing Alternative Trade
for the Global Economy

Selected chapters from:

O'Donnell *Poco a Poco (little by little)*—Women Weaving Social Justice
La Otra Palabra.(the other word)

Emerson, R. Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes (for J term folks)
 deLanda, D. Yucatan Before and After the Conquest.(on reserve in Library)
 de Las Casas, B. The Destruction of the Indies.(handout)
 Fernandez-Kelly, P. For I and My People We Are Sold

Madre, “What’s So Liberal about Neoliberalism?”

Salzinger, “Manufacturing Sexual Subjects: Harassment, Desire, and Discipline on a Maquiladora Shopfloor”

Course Overview

We begin the term looking at the US border with Mexico, and investigate the impact of NAFTA and US immigration policies as manifested in border towns or *colonias* and labor and economic investment strategies as evidenced in sweatshops and factories called *maquilas*. We then turn to contemporary issues in Chiapas, Mexico, and place these current events in colonial and Mayan cultural contexts. The locating of past in the present continues when we examine the war in Guatemala and the subsequent outpouring of refugees into Mexico. Next, we examine gender, ethnicity, class, and global political economic interests as they intersect in Chiapas in the Mayan village context, as well as on the border of North and South.

In order to deal more effectively with group process, throughout the semester, we will participate in group activities, leadership training and development, and interpersonal relations’ meetings. We will also be working in the Oneonta community on fundraising campaigns for the health and human rights work of K’inal Antzetik and with Fair Trade textile sales and social justice community education in relation to Jolom Mayaetik.

In addition to classroom work, students are expected to attend relevant on campus and off-campus symposia and lectures.

Evaluation

1. Making Connections paper—5pp on Artisans, Fair vs. Free Trade and Neoliberalism 15%
2. de las Casas with link to the movie, “The Mission” 5pp paper Neocolonialism-Neoliberalism 15%
3. Paper 5pp on *Basta* and related readings 15%

4. Paper and internet research on World Bank, IMF, Human Rights, Neoliberalism, immigration and *Maquilas* Mayan Visions and Globalization of Hope 15%
5. Class participation 10%
6. Community service/fundraising project for K'inál Antzetik health and literacy programs for women and children or work on Fair Trade in conjunction with Jolom Mayaetik, Mayan women's weaving cooperative. In class final oral presentation and written task force research report 30%

Course Schedule

Global Capital Pimping Third World Women

- Sept 4 Where Did you Get Those Shoes? Exercise
 Introduction to the course Sharing expectations and goals
 Assignment: Internet Research on Labor, Border issues
 video "Zoned for Slavery"
 Readings—Fernandez Kelly For I and My People Chap 1;
 NAFTA readings in AFSC book Section 1 and 2 plus pp.
 99–110
 Review Maquila Organizing packet
 Madre "What's So Liberal about Neoliberalism?"
 EPICA pp. 67–70, 71–76, 179–191

Exercise analysis discussion: Are most of the clothes made locally or imported?

Handmade or factory?

Would this list be different 5, 10, 30 years ago? Why?

Why these countries?

Why would clothing companies manufacture their products in other countries?

Was this made by a woman or a man?

Do you know of the working conditions of the people who made our clothes? Unions? How is this part of globalization process? (See economic terms like globalization, transnational corporations, export processing zones in packet)

Do we have a responsibility as consumers to the human rights of workers who make the products we buy? Can consumers influence economic factors? If so, how?

Sept 11–18 Economic inequality, labor conditions, health
 Decision on community action project/site Develop
 community based work-migrant tutorial, labor justice
 groups, anti sweatshop, environmental groups, Fair
 Trade organizing, human rights
 “Child Labor in Mexico” video
 “The Trouble with Prosperity”
 Discuss website research
 Faculty discuss their research and activist work
 Readings: EPICA pp 77–82; AFSC Section 2
 Fernandez Kelly Chap 2–9
 Salzinger article (handout)

*{For students going to Chiapas
 Discuss ethics and the politics of participation.
 Articles on ethics and fieldwork
 O'Donnell slides
 Handouts on Field Observation and Field notes
 Assignment: Eat at The Lord's Table, Episcopalian Church,
 and afterwards, write up your observations.
 Include in your notes, descriptions of people, the event,
 drawings, maps, and patterns of interaction, language,
 interactions, and your place at the meal. Facility is located
 on Elm Street.}*
 Global Dating Game Exercise

Sept 25 Video: “Women on the Global Assembly Line”
 Discuss Fernandez-Kelly
 Readings: Popul Vuh selections
 Excerpt from de las Casas “Devastation of the Indies”
 and “Columbus Encounter” (article) and I Rigoberta

Oct 2 Discuss Popul Vuh, de Las Casas,
 Paper 1 on *Maquiladoras*/Neoliberalism/globalization of
 Hope due Oct 2

Oct 2 Discuss readings
 Popul Vuh, Mayan Cosmology
 Video: “Mayan Lords of the Jungle”
 Readings: The Other Word/*La Otra Palabra*-selections

- Oct 9 Spanish Invasion
Video: "The Mission"
Discuss The Other Word readings
Readings: *Basta*
Madre "What Chiapas Means to the U.S." AFSC section 3
Choose: Wollock "Globalizing Corn" OR
Harvey "The Implications of *Ejido Reform*" or Howard
and Homer-Dixon "Environmental Scarcity and Violent
Conflict—The Case of Chiapas, Mx."
or Eber article on globalization and Chiapas or O'Donnell
"Davida y Goliath: Rosalinda Meets the World Bank"
- Oct 14–15 Labor Religion Coalition Conference
Economic Inequality, labor, health
- Oct 16 Video: "*No a la Privatizacion*" (no to privatization)
Discuss *Basta* and other articles
Readings: selected articles from Z magazine, NACLA
Reports, CIEPAC report on militarization and drug war
O'Donnell "Pimping Maria from Puebla to Panama"
Paper on de las Casas Colonialism-Neocolonialism-
Neoliberalism due Oct 23
- Oct 20–3 BREAK
- Oct 29 Warfare, Genocide, Economic Violations
Conflict, and human rights
War on Drugs—Video "Arms for the Poor"
"If the Mango Tree Could Speak—The Effects of War on
Children—Guatemala and El Salvador"
Video: "America's School of Assassins"
Discuss Readings
Readings—EPICA pp. 13–36, sections I, III, IV, V, VIII
pp. 199–210 plus Epilogue
Selected readings from Castillo, The Other Word

Resistance

- Nov 6 Human Rights—Indigenous, Women’s, National, International
 Reading: Nash, *Mayan Visions*.
 AFSC section 6, 5, plus pp. 111–116
 O’Donnell “Poco a Poco—Women Weaving Social Justice”
 or K’in al Antzetik “Accompaniment in Women’s Land”
 Video: “*Mujeres Adelante*” (women forward)
 Paper on *Basta* due NOV 6

Gringostroika

(from Gomez Pena—“a continental grassroots movement
 that advocates the complete economic and cultural reform
 of US anarcho-capitalism”)

- Nov 13 Solidarity
 Video: Jolom Mayaetik—Walking in Women’s Land
 Reading: Grimes Intro, 2, 4, 6
 O’Donnell, “North South Solidarity: Mayan Women’s Rights
 in Global Context”
- Nov 20 Discuss Grimes
 Readings Grimes, *Artisans and Cooperatives* 7, 8, Postscript
 Video “The Strength of the Indigenous People of Mut Vitz—
 Producing Fair Trade Organic Coffee in the Highlands of
 Chiapas”
- Nov 27 John Ross Author of “Roots of Rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico”
- Dec 4 Discuss Grimes *Artisans and Coops*
 Video: “Maya Women’s Weaving”
 Readings: Gomez—Pena TBA Guillermo Gomez Pena—*The
 New World Border*
 “Midnight Express” (for Chiapas students)
 Poetry reading/performance of play or performance art
 Fiesta
 Paper 4 Artisans-Co-ops Paper Due Dec 10

Final (TBA) oral presentation to discuss community work/community written research-action report. Final Written and Oral Report Due in class

Final Project Grade Criteria Soc 335

A Work	Written Report—well organized, well written, contains all components as specified on Handout 1. 7 outside texts, 15 outside articles. These may include academic articles from websites. You may refer to articles you have used in previous papers. Oral Report—organized, theoretically informed by outside and class readings which are used to interpret and analyze your field experiences Creativity—innovative presentation and conception of appropriate community work Action—group has undertaken and completed community organizing or informational work relevant to topic Integration—individual work, oral and written is related to theoretical concepts Connections—to class work on Mexico, to community, to yourselves, between and across issues
B Work	underdeveloped theoretical framework reflected in written and oral work. Key literature and interconnections are missing.
C Work	Underdeveloped theory Work lacks integration, synthesis Connections to coursework, interconnections with other issues left implicit or are unexamined
D Work	Underdeveloped theory (class and outside readings) Unorganized oral, written presentation Community work is sparse and does not have internal continuity; inadequate account of community-based work

F Work Inadequate community work
 Failure to site sources or irregularities in citation or quotes
 Complete lack of outside sources
 Inattention to course readings
 Unequal division of labor in group project's write-up; claiming other students' work as yours.

Sociology 350 Crossing Borders-Dialogues on Social Justice
 North and South-Chiapas, Mexico
 January Term 2005

Professor Katherine O'Donnell
 Professor and Chair, Sociology
 Faculty, Women's Studies and Latin American and Caribbean Studies
 Hartwick College
 431-4894
 Arnold 31
 O_donnellk@hartwick.edu

We begin our course in San Cristóbal where we attend meetings and talks with indigenous leaders, anthropologists, linguists, political economists, lawyers, and human rights activists. Our work in San Cristóbal de las Casas is in conjunction with the human rights NGO, K'inál Antzetik and its sister organization, the Mayan women's weaving cooperative, Jolom Mayaetik. These two organizations will be sponsors of our delegation's visits to local villages, community organizations working on educational, health, and literacy initiatives, and with the cooperative, Jolom Mayaetik. While in residence in San Cristobal, members of our group will may utilize local research libraries, and independently study Tzotzil and backstrap loom weaving if desired. The program is conducted in Spanish with translation available. Work in conjunction with Jolom Mayaetik cooperative and the clinic in Tumbalá will be part of the course.

During the term, we will also travel with art historians and archeologists to the key Mayan archeological site of Palenque. Throughout the term, we will be working and traveling as a delegation in conjunction with K'inál Antzetik. We will be housed with local families.

January Evaluation

1. Site expert project-topic chosen in the fall, research completed over vacation. Students going to Chiapas, will choose from a list of key sites, events, or cultural practices and prepare one for presentation on-site in Mexico. Oral report done in January, graded 10%
2. Fieldnotes—Using methodologies outlined in Emerson et al, students will write observations and *analyses and connect with relevant class texts*. Due throughout Jan term—graded 20%
3. Research Paper—15pp properly-referenced. Develops a topic related to January work in Mexico. Incorporates assigned readings as well as outside research materials and formal references. 30%—due after January break.
4. Participation—20% *informed*, class discussion on and off campus. This includes attendance at class meetings, films, and lectures.
5. Paper on Nash, June 2001. Mayan Visions-The Quest for Autonomy in an Age of Globalization or O'Donnell, Katherine (manuscript) Weaving Transnational Solidarity 5pp 20% due in Chiapas

Preliminary Itinerary

Jan 4 Depart Newark
Jan 5–24 San Cristóbal, Chiapas, Mexico
Jan 24 Depart Mexico City Late arrival to Newark

APPENDIX 6

BEIJING DECLARATION OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

One of the most active and effective groups at the Women's NGO Forum were the indigenous women. They organized activities such as workshops and cultural events in the indigenous Women's Tent. After many days of discussion, they also issued a Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women which comprehensively sets out the major global and national causes of their plight. The Declaration, signed by 118 indigenous groups from 27 Southern and Northern countries, is published below.

-
1. THE Earth is our mother. From her we get our life, and our ability to live. It is our responsibility to care for our mother and in caring for our mother, we care for ourselves. Women, all females, are the manifestation of Mother Earth in human form.
 2. We, the daughters of Mother Earth, the indigenous women present at the NGO Forum of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, have come together to collectively decide what we can do to bring about a world which we would like our children and our children's children to live in. We acknowledge and build upon earlier declarations which evolved from earlier meetings and conferences, like the 1990 Declaration of the Second International Indigenous Women's Conference, the Kari-Oca Declaration of 1992, and those of various regional conferences of indigenous women, and the consultations and conferences done in preparation for this Beijing conference.
 3. This declaration is drafted in recognition of the existence of the UN Declaration of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, the Draft Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Cairo Declaration, and the Copenhagen Social Summit Declaration.

While we agree with most of the provisions of ILO Convention 169, we cannot fully endorse a Convention which remains silent on the use of nation-states of military force to remove indigenous peoples from their lands.

4. We stand in unity behind this '1995 Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women' which is the fruit of our collective efforts to understand the world and our situation as indigenous women, critique the Draft Platform for Action, and articulate our demands to the international community, the governments, and the NGOs.
5. We, the women of the original peoples of the world, have struggled actively to defend our rights to self-determination and to our territories which have been invaded and colonised by powerful nations and interests. We have been and are continuing to suffer from multiple oppression; as indigenous peoples, as citizens of colonised and neo-colonial countries, as women, and as members of the poorer classes of society. In spite of this, we have been and continue to protect, transmit, and develop our indigenous cosmovision, our science and technologies, our arts and culture, and our indigenous socio-political and economic systems, which are in harmony with the natural laws of Mother Earth. We still retain the ethical and aesthetic values, the knowledge and philspirituality, which conserves and nurtures Mother Earth. We are persisting in our struggles for self-determination and for our rights to our territories. This has been shown in our tenacity and capacity to withstand and survive the colonisation happening in our lands in the last 500 years.
6. The 'New World Order' which is engineered by those who have abused and raped Mother Earth, colonised, marginalised, and discriminated against us, is being imposed on us viciously. This is recolonisation coming under the name of globalisation and trade liberalisation. The forces behind this are the rich industrialised nation-states, their transnational corporations, financial institutions which they control like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). They will cooperate and compete among themselves to the last frontiers of the world's natural resources located in our lands and waters.
7. The Final Agreement of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the establishment of the WTO has created new instruments for the appropriation and privatisation of our community intellectual rights through

the introduction of the trade-related intellectual property rights (TRIPs). This facilitates and legitimises the piracy of our biological, cultural, and intellectual resources and heritage by transnational corporations. Our indigenous values and practice of sharing knowledge among ourselves, and mutual exchange will become things of the past because we are being forced to play by the rules of the market.

8. Bio-prospecting, which is nothing but the alienation of our invaluable intellectual and cultural heritage through scientific collection missions and ethnobotanical research, is another feature of recolonisation. After colonising our lands and appropriating our natural resources, they are now appropriating our human genetic resources, through the Human Genetic Diversity Project. Their bid for the patenting of life forms is the ultimate colonisation and commodification of everything we hold sacred. It won't matter any more that we will disappear because we will be 'immortalised' as 'isolates of historic interest' by the Human Genetic Diversity Project.
9. It is an imperative for us, as Indigenous Peoples, to stand in their way, because it means more ethnocide and genocide for us. It will lead to the disappearance of the diverse biological and cultural resources in this world which we have sustained. It will cause the further erosion and destruction of our indigenous knowledge, spirituality, and culture. It will exacerbate the conflicts occurring on our lands and communities and our displacement from our ancestral territories.

Critique of the Beijing Draft Platform for Action

10. The Beijing Draft Platform for Action, unfortunately, is not critical at all of the 'New World Order'. It does present a comprehensive list of issues confronting women and an even longer list of actions which governments, the UN and its agencies, multilateral financing institutions, and NGOs should do. It identifies 'the persistent and increasing burden of poverty' as the number one critical concern. It acknowledges that 'most of the goals of the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies...have not been achieved.' It also acknowledged that 'in the past decade the number of women

living in poverty has increased disproportionately to the number of men...'

11. However, it does not acknowledge that this poverty is caused by the same powerful nations and interests who have colonised us and are continuing to recolonise, homogenise, and impose their economic growth development model and monocultures on us. It does not present a coherent analysis of why is it that the goals of 'equality, development, and peace', become more elusive to women each day in spite of three UN conferences on women since 1975. While it refers to structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), it only talks about mitigating its negative impacts, not questioning the basic framework undergirding SAPs. It even underscores the importance of trade liberalisation and access to open, and dynamic markets, which to us, pose the biggest threat to our rights to our territories, resources, intellectual and cultural heritage.
12. The clear bias of the New World Order for big industries, big agribusiness corporations, etc., has meant the decimation of traditional livelihood and economic activities of indigenous peoples like hunting, food gathering and harvesting, reindeer herding, subsistence agriculture, fishing, small handicraft businesses, etc. The non-economic activities of indigenous women have been ignored and rendered invisible, although these sustain the existence of indigenous peoples. Our dispossession from our territorial land and water base, upon which our existence and identity depends, must be addressed as a key problem. The Platform is very vague on this.
13. The critical areas of concern it has identified are also critical for indigenous women. While it correctly identifies unequal access to education and health as areas of concern, it does not question the basic Western orientation of the prevailing education and health systems. It does not reflect the fact that these systems have perpetuated the discrimination against indigenous peoples. It also does not acknowledge the role of Western media, education, and religion, in eroding the cultural diversity which exists among indigenous peoples. These Western systems hasten ethnocide. It does not give proper recognition and importance to indigenous health care systems and the role of its practitioners.
14. The violence and sexual trafficking of indigenous women and the increasing numbers of indigenous women becoming labour

exports, has been aggravated by the perpetuation of an economic growth development model which is export-oriented, import-dependent, and mired in foreign debt. Military operations conducted on indigenous peoples' lands use rape, sexual-slavery, and sexual trafficking of indigenous women, to further subjugate indigenous peoples. The development of tourism to attract foreign capital has also led to the commodification of indigenous women and the dramatic increase in the incidence of HIV/AIDS. This reality is not addressed by the Platform. Domestic violence and the increasing suicide rates among indigenous women, especially those who are in highly industrialised countries, are caused by psychological alienation and assimilationist policies characteristic of these countries.

15. While it talks about the effects of persecution and armed conflict, it does not acknowledge that many of these armed conflicts are occurring on indigenous peoples' lands. These armed conflicts are the result of the aggressive actions of transnational corporations and governments to appropriate the remaining resources on indigenous peoples' territories despite the assertion of indigenous peoples to their right to control these resources.
16. Its recommended 'strategic objectives' and actions focus on ensuring women's equal access and full participation in decision-making, equal status, equal pay, and in integrating and mainstreaming gender perspectives and analysis. These objectives are hollow and meaningless if the inequality between nations, races, classes, and genders, are not challenged at the same time. Equal pay and equal status in the so-called First World is made possible because of the perpetuation of a development model which is not only unsustainable but causes the increasing violation of the human rights of women, indigenous peoples, and nations elsewhere. The Platform's overemphasis on gender discrimination and gender equality depoliticises the issues confronting indigenous women.

Indigenous Women's Proposals and Demands

17. Within the context of our understanding of our situation and our critique of the 'New World Order' and of the Beijing Draft Platform for Action, we present the following demands: **RECOGNISE AND RESPECT OUR RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION**

18. That all governments and international non-governmental and governmental organisations recognise the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination, and enshrine the historical, political, social, cultural, economic, and religious rights of the indigenous peoples in their constitutions and legal systems.
19. That the governments ratify and implement the ILO Convention 169 only after thorough consultations with indigenous peoples.
20. That the 1994 Final Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples be adopted and ratified by governments without any revisions and reservations. That the full participation of indigenous peoples in the open-ended working group of the Commission on Human Rights to further elaborate on the draft will be ensured.
21. That the 's' in term indigenous peoples be put in all United Nations documents, declarations, and conventions. That, hereafter, we will not be referred to as ethnic minorities or cultural communities but as indigenous peoples.

Recognise and Respect our Right to our Territories, and Right to Development, Education, Health

22. We demand that the international community and governments recognise and respect our rights to our territories. This includes our right to decide what to do with our lands and territories and to develop in an integrated, sustainable way, according to our own cosmovision.
23. We urge the governments who are opening up our territories to foreign investors especially to mining corporations, to respect these rights. Full disclosure of development projects and investments to be put into our territories should be done. We should be fully involved in making decisions on these matters. Indigenous peoples' lands which have been ravaged by mining corporations, or which have become dumping sites of toxic, radioactive and hazardous wastes, should be rehabilitated by the corporations or the governments which allowed this devastation.
24. That the governments, international organisations and NGOs assume their responsibility to alter their policies and allocate resources for the intercultural and bilingual educational system and the development of indigenous health care systems according to our cultural principles and cosmovision. That books, audio and

- video materials, etc. be screened and purged of discriminatory, racist, and sexist, content.
25. That the governments implement realistic policies which will solve the problem of illiteracy among indigenous and peasant women, providing them access to intercultural and bilingual education which respects indigenous cosmologies, promotes non-sexist formative education which puts women and men in touch with the land.
 26. That the governments and international community implement health policies which guarantee accessible, appropriate, affordable and quality services for indigenous peoples and which respect and promote the reproductive health of indigenous women. That budget allocations to health and other social services be increased to at least 20% of the national budget and that a significant amount of this goes to indigenous peoples' communities.
 27. That the indigenous health care systems and practices of indigenous peoples be accorded the proper recognition and respect and the roles of indigenous health practitioners and healers be further enhanced.
 28. That the dumping of hazardous drugs, chemicals and contraceptives on indigenous peoples communities be stopped. We demand that coercive family planning services, like mass sterilisation of indigenous women, coercive abortion programmes, be stopped. That population policies like transmigration be condemned and halted.
 29. We demand that uranium mining taking place in our lands and nuclear testing in our territories and waters be stopped. If no uranium mining is done then there will be no nuclear weapons, nuclear reactors, and nuclear accidents.

Stop Human Rights Violations and Violence against Indigenous Women

30. That the United Nations create the necessary mechanisms to monitor the indigenous peoples' situation especially those facing the threat of extinction and human rights violations and to stop these ethnocidal and genocidal practices.
31. Call on all the Media and Communication Systems to realise that Indigenous Women refuse to continue to be treated and considered as exotic, decorative, sexual objects, or study-objects, but instead

to be recognised as human beings with their own thinking and feeling capabilities and abilities for personal development, spiritually, intellectually and materially.

32. Demand for an investigation of the reported cases of sexual slavery and the rape of indigenous women by the military men happening in areas of armed conflict, such as those within Karen territories in Burma, Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh, etc. The perpetrators should be persecuted and the survivors be provided justice and rehabilitation services.
33. Demand for an investigation of the forcible mass sterilisation and anti-fertility programmes done among indigenous women. Identify which international and national agencies are responsible for these and make them accountable.
34. That all acts of discrimination against Indigenous Women be considered and punished as a crime.
35. That the governments create juridical and social instruments adequate to protect women from domestic and state violence.
36. That indigenous customary laws and justice systems which are supportive of women victims of violence be recognised and reinforced. That indigenous laws, customs, and traditions which are discriminatory to women be eradicated.
37. That all internally displaced indigenous peoples be allowed to return to their own communities and the necessary rehabilitation and support services be provided to them.

Recognise and Respect our Rights to our Intellectual and Cultural Heritage and our Rights to Control the Biological Diversity in our Territories

38. We demand that our inalienable rights to our intellectual and cultural heritage be recognised and respected. We will resist all processes seeking to destroy this heritage and alienate our resources and knowledge from us.
39. We demand that the Western concept and practice of intellectual property rights as defined by the TRIPs in GATT, not be applied to indigenous peoples' communities and territories. We demand that the World Trade Organisation recognise our intellectual and cultural rights and not allow the domain of private intellectual rights and corporate monopolies to violate these.

40. We call for a stop to the patenting of all life forms. This to us, is the ultimate commodification of life which we hold sacred.
41. We demand that the Human Genetic Diversity Project be condemned and stopped. Those responsible for this project should be asked to make an accounting of all the genetic collections they have taken from indigenous peoples and have these returned to the owners of these genes. The applications for patents to these genetic materials should be stopped and no applications, thereafter, should be accepted and processed. Indigenous peoples should be invited to participate in the ongoing discussions in UNESCO on the bioethics of the Human Genome.
42. We demand that governments at the local, regional, and national levels, recognise our intellectual community rights and support us in our defence of these rights, an obligation which they have undertaken as Parties to the Biodiversity Convention.
43. We will continue to freely use our biodiversity for meeting our local needs, while ensuring that the biodiversity base of our local economies will not be eroded. We will revitalise and rejuvenate our biological and cultural heritage and continue to be the guardians and custodians of our knowledge and biodiversity.

Ensure Political Participation of Indigenous Women and Enhance their Capabilities and Access to Resources

44. We demand equal political participation in the indigenous and modern structures of socio-political structures and systems at all levels.
45. We will dialogue with non-indigenous women's organisations and formations to implement a realistic plan of solidarity with the us.
46. We ask that NGOs that work with Indigenous Women be guided by principles of mutual respect and promote the full participation of Indigenous Women in action and in articulating issues regarding Indigenous Women and Indigenous Peoples.
47. Call on the funding agencies and donor agencies that support and promote women's organisations and programmes, to share space and financial resources in order to promote the development of Indigenous Women.
48. We will work towards reinforcing our own organisations, enhancing communications between us, and gain the space that is rightfully

- ours, as members of specific identities (nations and cultures) within the Decade of Indigenous Peoples and other institutions that represent governmental and non-governmental organisations.
49. We will work towards the holding of an International Conference of Indigenous Women which will be held as part of the celebration of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.
 50. We offer our sincere thanks to the Chinese Organising Committee and the Chinese people for their efforts in hosting and providing hospitality to us. (Third World Resurgence No. 61/62, Sept/Oct 1995)

APPENDIX 7

JOLOM MAYAETIK WEB PAGE AND ADDRESS

COOPERATIVA JOLOM MAYAETIK

TEL Y FAX: 9671125071

SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LAS CASAS, CHIAPAS

VISITA NUESTRO BLOG (visit our blog): <http://cooperativajolom.blogspot.com/>

Wednesday January 21, 2009

MAYA WOMEN WEAVERS COOP JOLOM MAYAETIK

We are tsotsil and tseltal indigenous artisan women of the Highlands region of Chiapas, Mexico, who have been walking together in search of new possibilities that will allow us to strengthen our family and community economy. We participate in social, political, and economic spaces because we believe that the commercialization of our products does not resolve the multiple problems that we confront every day: poverty, marginalization, and racism. Assuming our organizational process, making decisions with regards to our cooperative, and administering it ourselves has allowed us to begin to construct our autonomy.

Our cooperative is composed of over 250 [now 186] women from the municipalities of San Andrés Larrainzar, Chenalhó, Oxchuc, San Juan Chamula, Zinacantan y Pantelhó. It is from this diverse group that we have been able to produce all of the traditional designs from these regions. We continuously attend training workshops in the areas of administration, accounting, new designs, dressmaking, and topics for reflection such as indigenous and women's rights, rescuing historical memory, etc. to strengthen ourselves, keep us going, and allow us to reach our objectives.

The growth of the Jolom Mayaetik Cooperative and the Center for Training has shown us that the creation and use of collective spaces for women allows us to develop relationships, both within our communities and also between our communities and the larger public, of a more equal nature. Our work thus contributes to the development of a more just society.

Techniques

For thousands of years, rituals have given each indigenous group a meaning of life. Without doubt, the survival of weaving, techniques, colors, and symbolism, has preserved the representation of the Mayan world: fertility, life, death, beliefs, and deities. The cosmology and history of an entire culture is written on every weaving and serves as a communion between mortals and deities. Found in every texture are the diamond or in occasions a zigzag representing a snake, both symbols of a universe in harmony, or the maize plant, symbol of mother earth with its multiple arms with which it embraces her children.

Though the majority of us weave with the back-strap loom, some of us embroider as well. Whether it be in weaving or in embroidery, all of us use cotton and self-produced wool. Nowadays with the search for diverse markets, current cultures partake in this millennium old legacy. Ancient techniques such as the back strap loom or natural dyes are intertwined with techniques brought from outside such as the pedal loom or more modern ones such as sewing machines. This allows young women to work without having to migrate to the cities and continue developing the culture of textile. This way we can still create traditional designs, while at the same time creating new designs.

Jolom Mayaetik shares this search with the French civil association: “El Camino.” Through this search we learn to adapt ourselves to the demands of the market without forgetting the traditional designs. These are novel products that incorporate new artistic designs with traditional symbols and technique to create new ideas for the diverse world market.

Each municipality has its own traditional style and traditional designs. Below are links to each municipality, and will describe their weaving techniques and show their traditional dress.

PROJECTS

When we started the cooperative Jolom Mayaetik we wanted a different kind of cooperative. We wanted a space where we could have more freedom and do new and creative things. Apart from the commercialization of our products we are taking workshops, we go on sales trips, and we have visited other states and countries. This cooperative is dif-

ferent because it is us who administer it. It is us who go on the trips and speaking tours. Through the cooperative we are able to participate in courses and workshops. With the cooperative we have the option of political participation. And we are independent of the government.

In this learning process we have been accompanied by an organization called Kínal Antzetik (Land of Women). They visit us in the communities and prepare workshops of administration, accounting, and sales and thanks to them we have learned how to organize ourselves and drive and administer our cooperative.

Now we are working on the construction of an educational center in conjunction with the women in Kinal Antzetik. There we have workshops of marketing, natural dyes, computation, Spanish, English, women's rights, and indigenous rights. In this space we are also constructing a space where women can stay when they travel to San Cristobal from their communities.

Other projects include working in our organic garden, and producing our book. This book is about our lives as indigenous women. We are producing in cooperation with the women of Kinal Antzetik. You can read the first chapter here (we are sorry, but it is not available in English at this point). If you have more interest in these projects you can write us here.

APPENDIX 8

LIST OF SUPPLIES AND MEDICINES NEEDED BY THE CHOL CLINIC IN 2001

Lista de Medicamentos y Materiales que se necesitan en la Clinica Médica Ch'ol

Amoxicilina	500 mg	<i>cápsulas</i> (capsules)
Amoxicilina	250 mg	suspension
Penicilina		suspension
Penprocilina	800000 U	<i>inyección</i> (injection)
Penprocilina	400000 U	<i>inyección</i>
Ventolin		<i>Jarabe</i> (syrup)
Ventolin		tabl.
Adalat		<i>cápsulas</i> (capsules)
Captopril	25 mg	tabl. (tablet)
Augmetin	125 mg	suspension
Bactrin		suspension
Bactrin	F	tabl.
Bactrin	supple	tabl.
Voltaren		<i>inyección</i>
Voltaren		tabl.
Ilosone	500 mg	tabl. (Eritromicina)
Ilosone	250 mg	tabl.
Ilosone	125 mg	suspension
Ilosone	250 mg	suspension
Ciprofloxicina	500 mg	tabl.
Ciproflosina	250 mg	tabl.
Metronidazol	500 mg	<i>grag.</i> (lozenge)
Metronidazol	250 mg	<i>grag.</i> (lozenge)
Metronidazol	125 mg	susp.
Metronidazol	250 mg	susp.
Albendazol		tabl.
Albendazol		susp.
Quadridesme		<i>Pomada</i> (ointment)
Synalos	simple	<i>Pomada</i> (ointment)

Deltamal		<i>gotas oftálmico</i> (eye drops)
Zincfrin		<i>gotas oftálmico</i> (eye drops)
Posipen	500 mg	cap. (Dicloxacilina)
Posipen	250 mg	cap.
Posipen	125 mg	susp.
Tempra		<i>gotas inf.</i> (drops)
Tempra		<i>jarabe</i> (syrup)
Tempra	500 mg	tab.
Methergen	grag.	Y <i>iny.</i> (injection)
Iboprofeno		grag. (lozenge)
Alin	8 g	<i>iny.</i> (injection)
Naxen	500 mg	tabs.
Naxen	250 mg	tabs.
Flanax	550 mg	tabs.
Mensulid		tabs.
Mensulid		susp.
Cheracol	D	<i>Jarabe</i> (syrup)
Cheracol	D	Cap.
Panclasa		Cap.

Pinzas para suturar para promotoras (Son 25 *promotoras*) (tweezers for sutures for 25 health promoters)

Ultrasonido (ultrasound)

Equipo para limpieza de dientes portátil (portable dental equipment to clean teeth)

Acumulador para luz solar (solar collector)

4 tazas de baños (4 bedpans)

Mesa de curación (curing table)

APPENDIX 9

BARBARA SCHÜTZ, K'INAL ANTZETIK, LETTER OF
CONCERN TO INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD/
GLOBAL PARTNERS PROGRAM 2001

12/11/2001

Dear Ruth, dear Donna,

I feel sorry having to write this letter; I do feel sadness and anger.

I spoke also with the women from K'in al and they also feel the same. I spoke to Rosalinda from Jolom and she just said: "That can't be, women did work during the nights in order to produce the bags quickly". She is going to write a letter in the name of Jolom.

I'm not sure if this all is due to a big misunderstanding or lack of communication. When Kate wrote that you wanted a thousand bags, and another thousand in 6 months time, it seemed to be something sure—even though you did not have the price right away. We were late in sending the price to you because we were working on a catalogue and within this work we were revising and readjusting the prices. Meanwhile, the women started to produce in order to respond to the order as fast as possible.

[You say]the price seems too high. I think if you are going to order that quantity of artesan work you should be aware that these are not factory-made products; it is the work and the life of 250 women. Not all of the money goes to the women, that's right, some of it is for the cooperative in order to pay the rent, the salaries of the cooperative's principal officers, other administrative costs as water, gas, electricity, telephone, the transportation for the women from the communities who come down to bring their products,...Prices are calculated by calculating the prime material, the working hours, and of course, taking into the account the prices in the market. In the local market the women can't even get half of the minimum wage which is about three dollars for 8 hours working day, not even in the US do people earn this money. Often it is the only income for families with up to 8 or 12 children.

You might think that life in a third world country is cheaper. It definitely is, but there are costs which are the same as in any “developed country”. Health service and medicine, for example, for a majority simply is not achievable. So the price for their products is what women have to ask for in order to survive.

And what women have learned in the last years in Chiapas is that they have the right to ask for respect, for justice. It is a question of dignity not to give away their products for nothing. And it is not just any product—their weavings contain their lives, their dreams, their sweat.

If you want to have a “global partnership” with an artesan coop you should in the first place have respect for their lives and their work.

You might not have thought about it, when you saw the little cute bags, you thought they could be a good present. If you wanted to have something—a dollar’s worth, you have to go the mall—or ask for a product that costs a dollar, for example, there are little bracelets—or you simply should have asked for less, so that it would not go beyond your budget.

We still to want the relationship with you, but we want a relationship with respect, without reproducing power and domination structures. I hope that both parts can contribute what they have to give in order to nurture us mutually and to learn from each other.

That’s all for today,

We are waiting for a response

Barbara and the women from K’inál

APPENDIX 10

MAY 17, 2001 O'DONNELL E-MAIL PROPOSAL FOR FAIR TRADE-YOUTH CAFE IN ONEONTA, NEW YORK

Over the last couple of years, I have been sending faculty community-based learning ideas that link to the curriculum. In this case, I am thinking of a model of having a student-run shop in downtown Oneonta. If it were Hartwick—affiliated, perhaps it could run with work-study students. It could also employ interns in various majors.

I would envision such a shop being a cozy, accessible place for multiple ages, selling fair trade coffee and products, having cozy seating areas for reading, providing Latin, folk, classical, women's and alternative music, selling lots of cross cultural materials/books and progressive reading like *The Nation* and other alternative Green, feminist, 3rd world magazines and papers. I would be particularly interested in the shop carrying the products of the women's weaving cooperative with whom I work, as well as the products of other similarly cooperative enterprises. I believe that the cooperative dimension is interesting for Carli, too.

The notion of a Fair Trade Store means that the shop operates within principles outlined by the fair trade organization. The goal is to educate consumers on labor issues, human rights concerns, environmental issues, and North-South trade issues (like *maquila* manufacturing and export processing zones) and to sell products which foster greater consciousness and equity.

Oneonta's youth could use such a space; our teens have no youth center, (neither does our campus).

Email Me Mocha closed, and Circle Park where lots of kids used to hang out downtown is gone. There is also modest interest in the Youth Advocate community (as founder of OCAY I am in these meetings), specifically, St. James Church (Ichthus Youth Ctr) and the YMCA (has city contract to provide teen activities), to provide a coffeehouse-like atmosphere for the community. We don't have anything close to that for teens now, although 30 years ago, several existed in Oneonta. Such a space also assists Oneonta with the vacant downtown shop situation.

At a recent Anthropology conference, I met a Fair Trade store operator and anthropologist who lives in Delaware. Also, in April when my colleagues from the Mayan women's weaving cooperative, Jolom Mayaetik, and their sister NGO, K'in al Antzetik, visit, another colleague from Florida who curated the Mayan textile exhibit, and who runs a for-profit import store handling the Jolom items, will be in town. If you are interested in the coffeehouse/store idea, let me know. I believe that Esperanza Roncero also put a link to the fair trade group on the Encuentros/Encounters-Arts and Social Justice WEBpage that can be accessed through the Hartwick home page.

I know that a number of Sociology courses address the theoretical and ethical issues outlined above, as race, class, gender, ethnic, North-South identities and conflicts as well as youth related issues like youth culture, education, drug and alcohol use, and juvenile delinquency are central concerns. I am not sure, how much attention other courses and majors (for example management) pay to non-profits or organizations that don't work on a purely capitalist basis.

This could be an interesting exercise in community-building, youth advocacy, and community-campus collaborations. It certainly links to a number of majors and disciplines if done correctly.

I am ccing many of the people I know who are interested in progressive ideas. By the way, this would be something to be working on over the next year or more. By the time it's up and running, some of our kids will be approaching the age to use it. By the way, if you are interested in working on Oneonta Youth issues, OCAY needs input and energy.

Thanks.

Kate O'Donnell

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